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REV.P JOHN GAMBOLD, M.A.

Published by William Collins, Glasgow.

THE

WORKS

OF THE

REV. JOHN GAMBOLD, A. M.

LATE ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE UNITED BRETHREN.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

THOMAS ERSKINE, ESQ.
ADVOCATE,
AUTHOR OF
Remarks on the Internal Evidence for the Truth of Revealed Religion.

SECOND EDITION.

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

It has long been received as a maxim amongst those who have studied politics, in connection with the philosophy of human nature, that the surest and shortest way of making men good subjects and good citizens, is to make them happy subjects and happy citizens. When we say that a man is happy as a subject, or as a citizen, or as a member of any society, we feel that we are just saying, in other words, that he is attached to the government, or state, or society under, or in which he lives; and that he is, of course, disposed to fulfil the duties connected with these relations. It is a maxim founded on the instincts of man; and however it may be neglected in practice, it has too much obvious truth in it, to be often controverted in the abstract. Some speculative philanthropists have given this maxim a more splendid and imposing form. They say, "Surround a man with circumstances, and you make of him what you please; command his circumstances, and you command his character." This proposition has not met with so favourable a reception as the other, although it is probably intended to convey precisely the same idea, namely, that a man's character de-

pends on, or is moulded by events and facts external to himself. Indeed, it is impossible to make a man happy in any relation, without commanding his circumstances in some degree,—and so those, who admit the first proposition, are bound in reason to admit the second. Perhaps the equivocal use of the word *circumstances* may have occasioned some part of the coldness with which it has been received. But, certainly, the chief part is to be ascribed to the unmasked openness with which it comes forward. It assumes a postulate which can never be granted, namely, that it is in the power of man to command circumstances to an indefinite extent. Men may flatter themselves that they can make each other happy, in *general*, but when they are brought to *particulars*, they know and acknowledge that their power is very limited, that they cannot avert pain, or death, or remorse. We are in the habit of calling a man's visible relations, and especially his fortune, health, and family circle, exclusively his circumstances—and as we have many proofs that these circumstances, in their most prosperous state, cannot ensure happiness, we think ourselves entitled to deny it of all circumstances. But every thing which comes in contact with a man's feeling or thought; every thing which occasions joy or sorrow, hope or fear, love or hate, may come properly under the denomination of circumstances. In truth, every feeling arises from some circumstance or cause in contact with us, and yet external to us,—and we know neither happiness nor misery except from circumstances. It is no exaggeration then to say, that

if we could command the circumstances of a man we could also command his happiness and his character. But of whom can it be said, without exaggeration, that he really can command the circumstances of any sensitive, and intelligent, and immortal being? The relations of human existence are numerous, and to each of these relations belong its peculiar circumstances. Men are fathers, brothers, husbands, sons, friends, masters, servants, rulers and subjects. They are connected by blood, by business, and by mutual interest—and there are many supposable circumstances in these relations, capable of producing much joy or much sorrow. Who can command these circumstances? Moreover, men are creatures accountable to their Creator. This is the grand and permanent relation. All other relations cease with our life, and even with the lives of others. A man ceases to be a father, when he dies himself, or when all his children are dead,—he ceases to be a husband, when his wife is dead,—but he cannot cease to be a creature whilst his existence continues in any mode or form whatever. Who can command the circumstances of this relation? Who is it that can surround the spirit of a man with the light of the divine countenance? and make this light an abiding and a continual circumstance, accompanying him through life, and bringing into near and distinct vision, the undisturbed, unfading, and increasing glories of eternity? Who is he that can remove from a mind convinced of its rebellion against God, and of the justice and awfulness of his displeasure—who can remove from such a mind, the fearful look-

ing for of judgment? Besides, this great relation is not only permanent, it is also the root, and the regulator of all the rest. Who placed us in these various passing relations? Our Creator. And our relation to him it is, which binds us to fulfil the duties of these relations faithfully.

Of these inferior relations, some are more important to our happiness than others. Thus, a man's peace is not so much destroyed by having a worthless servant, or by meeting with a reverse of fortune, as by having a wicked son, or a false friend. Whilst the circumstances belonging to the more important relations of life continue favourable, adverse ones in the less important, can be easily supported. But one unfavourable circumstance in the closer and nearer relations, will often cast its own dark shadow over a uniform prosperity in all the lower relations. We find that this is the case in the temporary relations of this world, and it is so also in the first and highest relation. A man can generally escape from what is painful in this world's relations. He can leave his country, and whatever it contains, if he does not like it; or if he cannot do this, he knows that a few years must free him from oppressive rule, from bad health, from unkind friends, and from all other evils peculiar to this life. The thought of a near deliverance is a powerful mitigator of affliction. There are many hours too, in which he may withdraw himself from his circumstances of sorrow, and then he may have some repose. But if the circumstances of his chief relation, his state before God, be favourable; then, even in the midst of the

most overwhelming of this world's calamities, he is an enviable man; there may be, and will be, in spite of occasional eclipses, a deep substantial peace within him, the reflected image of the Sun of Righteousness,—he does not look on passing events, as the channels of joy or sorrow, but as the indications of his gracious Father's will, calling him to the exercise of faith and love, those holy principles, in the perfection of which, consists the perfection of happiness—he hath a refuge which the world sees not, and into it he fleeth and is safe—he can even rejoice in tribulations, whilst he thinks of "the man of sorrows," and of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is wrought out by these light afflictions which are but for a moment—he looks forward to the glorious morning of the eternal sabbath, and he feels that he is free and happy for ever.

But if the circumstances of this highest relation be wrong, all is wrong. They may be wrong, and often are, without being felt to be so. There are many who have not set down their relation to God in the list of their relations, who have never regarded his favour or displeasure, as circumstances of their condition, and who have never looked into eternity as their own vast, untried dwelling-place, destined to be either their heaven or their hell. And yet this is the chief relation, and these are the chief circumstances of their being. The very root of the moral existence of such persons is dead. Their circumstances are, in truth, most deplorable, and their insensibility to pain from them, arises from palsy, not from health. But in some, just so much

animation remains, that these mighty circumstanc
are felt to be unfavourable, and then they black
existence and convert it into anguish. They pois
every other relation, and paralyze action in eve
other duty. Escape is impracticable. The o
remedy lies in having these circumstances alter
But who can command these circumstances? C
man command them?

A man who is happy as a father, or a friend, o
citizen, will be found to fulfil the duties of those
lations better than another equally conscientio
who is unhappy in these relations—because the c
will act cheerfully and from the heart, whilst t
other acts from the less lively principle of a sense
propriety. And where there is no conscientiousn
on either side, the man who is happy in those re
tions, will fulfil the duties arising out of them, na
rally so to speak, whilst the unhappy man will as na
rally neglect them. Happiness in one leading re
tion, will often cast its own cheerful glow on the l
pleasing circumstances of lower relations, and fill
the concomitant duties with its own life and vigo

Of what immense moment then must it be
have the circumstances of our highest relation, t
in which we stand to our Creator, favourable
happy! This would be purifying the fountain,
all the streams would be pure. This would be he
ing the root, and all the branches would bear g
fruit. But we must again return to that most i
portant and critical interrogation, who can comma
these circumstances? Who can give a man hap
ness, in the full view of *all* his relations?

There is nothing absurd in saying, "Command the circumstances of a man, and you command his character;" but there is a strange absurdity in supposing, that any power short of omnipotence can command these circumstances; because, the chief of our relations is that in which we stand towards him who is omnipotent. God alone can command these circumstances: no one but God has authority to say that our offences and failures in that relation are forgiven—that a full satisfaction has been made on our behalf, to the broken laws of the universal government—that the gates of the family of God are thrown open to us, and that we are invited every moment to speak to him as to a Father, and lean upon him, as on an almighty, and faithful, and tender friend—and that the unending duration to which we are advancing, is safe and peaceful, full of bliss, and full of glory. The circumstances of that highest relation have been most particularly and fully made known to us in the Bible, that we might have happiness, even the joy of the Lord, which, if really attained by us, will supply strength for the cheerful, and affectionate, and diligent performance of every duty, springing from every relation in life, and will be our comfort and hiding place, in every sorrow.

It has often struck us, as a very remarkable fact, that principles, which are generally recognized as most reasonable and true, when applied to the affairs of this life, should be instantly rejected as unreasonable and contemptible, when applied to the great concerns of eternity. We can easily suppose the smile of scorn with which a political philosopher

would look upon us, if in reply to his question, "What is the best way of leading back a nation of rebels to obedience to lawful authority, and of engaging them again in the peaceful duties of civil life?" We should return this answer, "Why, the best way is to inculcate upon them the duty of submission, to explain to them the particulars in which that duty consists, and to enforce upon their minds the guilt and the danger of revolt." He would probably give us to understand, that we knew nothing about the matter, and he would have very good reason to do so. But is it not strange, that if we asked *him*, "What is the best way of making careless sinful men good subjects of the King of heaven?" he should, almost to a certainty, give us an answer, if he thought the question deserved one at all, in all respects similar to that very reply which he had so deservedly scouted, when made by us to his political problem. He would tell us, "Oh you must explain their duties to them, and press them on their observance." Suppose then, that we were just to turn the tables on him, and ask him to answer his own question, and to allow us to answer ours. The answers would be very much alike, except in so far as the revolt against human authority had arisen from misgovernment. He would say, "All unnecessary causes of irritation must be removed, a full and unconditional amnesty must be proclaimed, pledges must be given, which may destroy all possible suspicion of the sincerity of the government, perfect security and safety must be immediately guaranteed, and subsequent promotion in the state

ascertained to them, in proportion to their qualifications." We might then say to him, "Take away the first clause of your answer, (for there is no unnecessary cause of irritation under God's government), and the remainder may stand for ours. We could particularize, if you wished it, the nature of that amnesty which God has proclaimed, and we could tell of the unutterable pledge of his sincerity, which he has given, even the Son of his love; but your political scheme contains the outline of the Christian dispensation; and your rejection of the latter, whilst you defend and preach the former, ought at least to make you suspect, that you are not quite so candid a philosopher as you think yourself, or, that at least you have made a wrong comparative estimate of the importance of the different relations in which you are placed, having excluded *that one* from the contemplation of your reason, which certainly claimed more than all others, the fulness of its powers." It is most probable too, that the free, and unconditional, and all-including amnesty, which he considers the wisest, and best, and most unassailable position in his political scheme, becomes the marked object of his severe moral censure, when it meets him in the Christian plan, under the name of free grace. In the real business of life (as he would term it), he fully and intelligently recognizes the principle, that the character of a man is moulded by his circumstances; and, therefore, when he designs to affect the character, he turns his skill and his power towards the circumstances which may influence it. He sees plainly within this field, that the

true and right fulfilment of the duties belonging to any relation in life, is best secured by happiness in that relation. But as soon as his mind is called to another field of contemplation—as soon as eternity is substituted for time, and the divine authority for this world's rulers, although human beings still continue the subjects to be influenced and operated on—his wisdom seems to forsake him, he rejects measures which, in all analogous cases, he admires, and proposes expedients, which he would blush to mention in any other case. There is evidently a most undeniable truth in what the Bible says of the disinclination of the natural man to receive the things of the spirit. There is nothing astonishing in his rejecting the humiliating fact, that he is deservedly under a sentence of condemnation, which would for ever exclude him from the light and favour of heaven—nor can we wonder that he should hesitate about receiving the fully-developed history of that love which passeth knowledge,—but we may well wonder, that he does not perceive that it is happiness, and happiness derived from known circumstances in this highest relation, as in all other relations, which can alone produce a full and cheerful performance of the duties arising out of it;—we may well wonder that he, who apprehends so thoroughly the uselessness and inefficiency of mere precepts and delineations of duty, in the political, and civil, and social relations of life, when unsupported by circumstances, in those relations, understood and felt, as constraining motives of action, should yet exclude from his religious system, every

thing living, and moving, and exciting, all circumstances in the relation of the creature to the Creator, which might lead to happiness, and so animate performance; whilst he retains only the moral aphorisms and exhortations, which are chiefly intended as the descriptions of the feelings and character, which a belief of the revealed circumstances would produce, and which can never, by any process of inculcation, reproduce themselves in minds constructed like ours.

The cheerful and willing obedience which flows from an affectionate heart, is the only service acceptable to him whose name is love, and whose law is the law of liberty. And can this be without joy? What draws the affection of the heart? Something amiable, something which pleases and produces delight. So joy is at the very spring of love and alacrity, and without joy there is nothing graceful, or noble, or free in action.

Do we wish, then, to perform fully the duties belonging to our various relations? Then joy must be infused into the circumstances of those relations. But how is this to be done? Who can command the gifts of fortune or nature? Who can stay the approach of sickness or death? Aye, and what are we to do for the other world? Will the joy of these temporary relations, supposing that we obtain it, carry us forward in healthy and cheerful action through another state of being? Let us be wise in this inquiry, and beware of wasting our time and our strength in vain attempts. Joy infused into the circumstances of any passing relation, perishes

when that relation perishes. But there is a permanent relation, and it also is the root from which all other relations grow. Oh how desirable to have joy infused *here*, that it might, like living sap, circulate through the whole tree of human relations, and bring forth much fruit on every branch! And praised be our God who hath shed forth joy abundantly on the circumstances of this relation, even joy unutterable and full of glory. He hath drawn aside the veil, and hath let in upon us the light of his own eternal blessedness. He hath done more. He hath said, "Come up hither." He hath changed our scene and our circumstances from earth to heaven—he hath given us a place in the upper sanctuary—he hath surrounded us with the privileges of his children—he hath joined us to the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names fill the bright and happy rolls of heaven, yea he hath united us to himself.

But it may be said, "Are the circumstances of this high relation contained in a revelation made to sinners in general, or to certain individuals in particular, for surely there are but few who seem to be happy with God?" The revelation is to sinners in general, but the things contained in it, are the circumstances of those only who believe in it. You do not command the circumstances of a blind man when you surround him with visible objects. They are not his circumstances, for they do not come in contact with his thought or feeling. In like manner the blessings of the gospel are not the circumstanc of a man who does not believe the gospel—for th

do not come in contact with his thought or feeling. No man can rejoice in that which he does not believe, and it is by peace and joy in believing that the character is purified and sanctified, and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

God has, in his revealed word, surrounded us with circumstances of peace and glory, when we deserved to be surrounded with circumstances of terror and despair. Our hearts have departed from God, and chosen things which he abhors. We think little of him, and feel little about him, and regard not his honour, and desire none of his ways. And yet we are his creatures, and, as such, are bound to obey him at the peril of our happiness for ever. He hath pronounced a sentence of condemnation against every sin—every departure of the will, or of the affections from him. Who is there that has not incurred this sentence? And yet, O! who could bear its infliction? None need bear it but those who refuse the message of mercy. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." The divine and human natures were united in the person of Christ—he became our representative—he suffered the sentence which had been pronounced against us—Jehovah was well pleased for his righteousness sake; for thus the law was magnified and made honourable. The work of atonement was declared complete by the resurrection of the surety; and pardon, and acceptance, and eternal life, were proclaimed to be the free gift of God, through the Saviour's name, to the chief of sinners. Joy must

be the immediate result of believing that guilt
danger, and condemnation, are done away—
eternity is secure and happy—and that the al
ty master of our destiny, the Judge whom we
offended, is our gracious father, and our kinc
compassionate friend. Hath God then reveal
us circumstances of joy in our eternal relation
himself, and shall we refuse to drink, yea, to
abundantly of these waters of gladness, that
hearts may be refreshed and filled with a holy al
to run in the way of all his commandments?
who profess to believe the gospel, do yet refu
drink of these waters; because, alas! they
hewn out to themselves, in the passing relatic
life, cisterns, which one day they will find
broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

But some there are, of spiritual minds and
ble hearts, who refuse to drink because they
themselves unworthy. "Let the advanced C
tian rejoice," say they, "but it would be pres
tuous in such polluted sinners as we are to rej
Ought not a polluted sinner to rejoice that he i
given? and farther, it is this holy grateful joy
God has appointed as the means of cleansing
renewing your nature. "Incline your ear and
unto me," saith the Lord, "hear and your soul
live: and I will make an everlasting covenant
you, even the sure mercies of David." "H
are the people that know the joyful sound." I
were called on to rejoice in yourselves, you
wait till you were better, and *long* you would
to wait: but when you are called on to rejoi

Christ, why should you wait? He and his salvation continue always the same, and the greater sinner you are, so much the greater and the more joyful is your deliverance. What made the shepherds rejoice? what made the Ethiopian eunuch and the Philippian jailor rejoice? Nothing in themselves surely; no, it was the exhilarating intelligence that sin was pardoned, that peace was restored between the Holy One who sitteth on the throne of heaven, and the rebellious outcasts of this earth. This is the joy which must lead the way, if we hope to make advances in the Christian course. There is another joy to be sure, but it never leads the way—it is not called the joy of the Lord—it consists in the consciousness, that the work of God's Spirit is going on in our souls, and that our hearts have, amidst many sins, been faithful to him who loved us. The way to obtain this latter joy is to abound in the former.

We know no author who has illustrated the origin and tendency of the joy of the Lord so simply, so beautifully, or so strikingly as JOHN. GAMBOLD, the author of the following productions. His mind was evidently of a very fine order. In his youth, he had mixed philosophical mysticism and theology together. He had formed an elevated, and pure, and holy idea of perfect goodness—he felt his obligation to attain to it—he attempted it long—and at last sunk under the mortifying and heart-chilling conviction, that he was only adding sin to sin, without advancing a single step towards his high object. Whilst he was in this melancholy condition, it pleased God that he should meet with

one of the Moravian brethren, who declared to hi the simple gospel, "that Christ is made of Gc unto us wisdom, and justification, and sanctificatio and redemption,"—that the only atonement th ever could be made for sin, was already made ar accepted,—that we neither could take away o guilt by any scheme of our own, nor was it nece sary, for Christ's blood had done it,—and that no we are called on and invited, as blood-bought ar well-beloved children, to follow him who had loved us, to keep near to him as the fountain of o life and happiness, and to testify our gratitude to hi by obeying his commandments. Pardon is pr claimed through the blood of Christ, and sanctific tion is the fruit of faith in that pardon. Mr. Gar bold gave up his laborious and unsuccessful effort and he walked by faith, in humble and peacef holiness, rejoicing in him who is the strength of h people. The simple, child-like joy for sin blott out, did for his soul what all his efforts, and since efforts they were, could never accomplish. Th joy is his great theme. But we cannot rejoice l *endeavouring* to rejoice, any more than we can lo by endeavouring to love. It is by keeping tl glorious and blessed circumstances of our relation God before our mind, that we shall feel, and co tinue to feel, a natural and unforced joy, which w produce a natural and unforced walk in the way God's commandments.

But what is the guard against the abuse of th doctrine? Let us look for it in the nature Christian joy and in its object. Christian joy

not a mere joy for deliverance from misery; it is joy for a deliverance effected by the atonement of Jesus Christ. This joy, therefore, has respect to the procuring cause of the deliverance, as well as to the deliverance itself. In the work of redemption are embodied all the divine attributes in perfect harmony. Joy becomes thus associated in the mind of the believer with each of these attributes, and it is this same joy which transcribes them on his heart. The object of the gospel, and of the joy arising from a faith in the gospel, is to conform us to the will and likeness of God. The law is thus the guard against the abuse or misinterpretation of the gospel. The law represents the character of God and of perfect happiness; and the gospel was given to associate that character with joy, and thus to write the law upon our hearts. If, then, we believe and rejoice, and yet do not grow in obedience to the law of God, we may be assured that it is not the true gospel which we are believing, nor true Christian joy which we are feeling. We must turn to the cross, and to the word which reveals the cross, and to the Spirit who alone can shine upon the word. Let us not be jealous of joy, but only let us be careful that it is "joy in the Lord." Joy is the first fruit of the gospel of Christ—and if we believe and yet do not rejoice, we may be assured that we have either added to the gospel or taken something from it—it is not the *very* gospel of Christ that we believe. This joy may consist with much sorrow, as it did in the case of those first teachers, who were sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

It takes away the poison from sorrow, and leaves only its tenderness. The exhortation to rejoice in the Lord was not so often repeated without good cause. If this glorious joy once filled our hearts it would leave no room for sorrow, or for those poor joys which, in their fading, produce sorrow, or for the base, and turbulent, and perplexing anxieties, passions, and appetites, which for the most part fill up the life of man. If the soul saw itself ever surrounded by the light of that love which shone so bright on Calvary,—if it saw every event and duty in life illuminated by that love—if the eternal world were ever present to it as its own home, and as the place where redeeming love is the very element of life, where unmixed blessedness reigns, where the tie which unites the Father of spirits to his children is felt in all its ecstatic endearment, and where the whole happy family are continually advancing in their Father's likewise, without fear of change and without the possibility of falling—O how buoyant would its spirits be! How freely, how boldly, how nobly, and yet how humbly and tenderly, would it pass along the course of its existence! In every action it would feel itself a commissioned agent of heaven; it would know that it is called to fulfil purposes, which it will require an eternity to unfold; it would have no will of its own, but would act or suffer according to the will of God, looking up to his Fatherly face, and rejoicing in his benignant smile.

The mind of Mr. Gambold was evidently deeply affected with these views. The first of the two

sermons which are contained in this volume was preached at a time when the free grace of the gospel was not much known in England; and never did any uninspired Sermon give a plainer or a sweeter exhibition of it. The Drama describes Christianity during the first ages. The Author's familiar acquaintance with the fathers enabled him to put much life and truth into the picture. Did we consider it our business to speak of the merits of this Drama as a poetical work, we could praise it highly. The reader of taste and discernment will discover much in it, which proves the very uncommon powers of the Author, and which would not have disgraced the first writers in our language. I may instance the last speeches in the dialogue between the two Deacons in the opening scene,—the exhortations of Ignatius before leaving Antioch,—and the whole concluding scene of the Drama. There are, perhaps, other parts which may strike Christians more; as, for example, the scene in which the conversion of the Soldier is described, and beautiful most assuredly it is. We remember at present only one passage in Shakespeare which is directly and unequivocally Christian, and that occurs in Measure for Measure, in the scene between Isabella and Angelo.—She is persuading him to pardon her brother, and she says,

> All the souls that were, were forfeit once;
> And He that might the vantage best have took,
> Found out the remedy: How would you be,
> If He, which is the top of judgment, should
> But judge you as you are? O think on that;
> And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
> Like man new made.

This is certainly in the good, though not in the highest style of the first genius that probably the world has ever seen, and yet there are many passages in Ignatius not inferior to it. There is to be sure a degree of stiffness and formality about the piece, but all of that which is disagreeable wears off upon acquaintance, and what remains rather accords with the unworldly character of the persons represented, and so adds to the general truth and interest. His second Sermon, on "Religious Reverence," though not equal throughout, contains some striking thoughts, couched in most powerful phraseology. There is a remarkable expression of devotedness in his first Hymn, and a most sweet and refined loveliness in the poem entitled "The Mystery of Life."

It is impossible to read his works without being convinced that he enjoyed much communion with God, and was much conversant with heavenly things, and that hence he had imbibed much of the spirit, and caught much of the tone, of the glorified church above. There is a strong reality in his writings; and, oh, it is the great matter after all to have the things of eternity brought into sensible contact with our minds, as present substantial circumstances, producing immediate feeling and action, and not allowed most fatally and foolishly to be mere subjects for conversation, or texts for speculative discussion. If these things be present with us as real circumstances, they will be the sources of real joy, of real confidence for eternity, and of real consistency of conduct whilst we are in this world. Plain unso-

phisticated minds are the fittest recipients of Christian truth. They have been accustomed to deal with realities, and thus the facts of revelation, when admitted, naturally come to them and operate on them as realities. On the other hand, metaphysicians and poets are very apt to convert the gospel into an ingenious argument and a beautiful dream. We must become as little children, and learn Christianity not as judges but as those who are to be judged by it. Let us follow this servant of God as he followed Christ. He was long bewildered in his search after happiness and holiness; at last he found them in the cross. Leaning on this he walked in peace and godliness whilst here, and departed hence in the sure hope of glory. His mind was evidently of a high order—his turn of thought is powerful and original—his imagination is of a fine ethereal quality—and his expression vigorous and striking. But our business is not with human genius, but with Christian doctrine. We do not recommend this book for the passing pleasure which it may afford, but for the permanent profit, which, by the divine blessing, may be derived from it. We recommend it as a perspicuous and serious illustration of divine truth—and our prayer is—that the eyes of our minds, and of the minds of all who read it, may be opened by the Spirit of God, to discern more and more our need of salvation, and the fulness and preciousness of that salvation which is in Christ Jesus.

"Now unto Him that is able to keep us from

falling, and to present us faultless before the pr sence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the onl wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, domi nion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

T. E.

Edinburgh, July, 1822.

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THE

LIFE

OF THE

REV. JOHN GAMBOLD.

E Rev. JOHN GAMBOLD was born April 10th, 11, at Puncheston, in Pembrokeshire, South ales. His father, a clergyman of the Church of gland, lived an ornament to his profession, being l known and respected for his unaffected piety and ity of manners. He had the happiness truly to w the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom he believed, l to love Him with his whole heart. He educated children with the utmost care and attention, and red no pains to instil into their tender minds the nciples and precepts of true Christianity, which verfully influenced his own heart, and were the ariable rule of his conduct.

His son, whose course through life, and personal alities are here recorded, had the benefit of his her's instruction and example until he went to the iversity of Oxford, in the year 1726, where he tered as servitor in Christ Church, and soon be-ne eminent for his diligent application to study,

in which his proficiency was remarkably conspicuous, particularly in his compositions, many of which his own great humility and diffidence suffered others to bear the credit of. He was naturally of a lively and active spirit, and the time he could spare from those studies which he was obliged to pursue in the college, he chose to spend in reading the most approved authors of poetry and plays. These were at that time very agreeable to his taste, and therefore he took great pleasure in such works of genius until the year 1728, when being present at the death of his affectionate father, that event, and the edifying exhortations he received from him in his last moments so affected him, that a real seriousness of mind, and solid concern for his salvation took place in him. From that period he became so far changed in his apprehension and view of things, that he renounced, from a principle of self-denial, all the pleasure he had received from books calculated to gratify the taste of the polite world; fell into a melancholy state of mind, and from being of an active and lively disposition, became quite the reverse.

Among his papers was found one containing a solemn dedication of himself to God, which he drew up about this time, and which he called his Baptismal Vow or Covenant renewed.

In March 1730, he contracted an acquaintance with some of those students in the university, who, in obedience to the dictates of pure religion, were then distinguished from others by a laudable singularity in their conduct; and he followed all the rules which they observed in regulating their time and

studies. Did they, according to the course of life which they had entered upon with a view to their religious improvements, diligently practise self-examination, meditation and recollection; did they carefully attend the church service, yet never omitting their private devotions; did they on certain days abstain from their usual food, to the intent that they might feel the wants of others in distress, and mortify the corrupt affections and desires of their own depraved nature; did they keep diaries of all occurrences both internal and external in their Christian race; frequent the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; visit the prisons, the sick, and the poor; instruct children whose parents were not able to bear the expense of their being taught even to read: did they exercise themselves in good works, doing, as often as opportunities presented, acts of charity to the bodies and souls of such as stood in need thereof? In all these pious exercises and religious duties he faithfully took his part with them in pursuit of that peace of mind which he laboured to obtain. But not being able by the use of such means only to gain that, which could make him happy, he gave way to those desponding thoughts from which he had formerly suffered much, totally neglected his person and apparel, confined himself as much as possible to his room, and applied, in search of information and comfort, to the works of such authors as he supposed could satisfy his inquiries, viz. the fathers of the first ages of the Christian church. Of these the most abstruse were his greatest favourites, and particularly those which are called mystics. Being well versed

in the Greek language, he was much pleased with that energy of expression in which it excels. The deep speculations of those ancient writers, their beautiful allusions, the richness of style with which they clothed their ideas, and that uncommon strain of piety which run through the whole, suited his taste, and so far influenced his understanding that he adopted their sentiments, went the same lengths with them in the scenes of imagination, and by degrees became so much like one of them, that his cast of mind bore a nearer resemblance to that which was peculiar to them, than to any that appeared among the moderns. This melancholy, notwithstanding, still continued, and the track of deep and intense thinking, to which he had accustomed himself by a strict application to these authors, rendered him, with respect to his conceptions of things, and manner of his conversation and address, very different not only from those with whom he was intimately acquainted, but from all other men. By a close attention to writers of this stamp he had contracted such a turn of mind, and imbibed such an exalted notion of internal purity, which he laboured to acquire according to the process pointed out by them, and which he conceived was attainable, that he could not be satisfied with himself, unless he became such a refined being as those philosophical Christians had formed a notion of in their warm imaginations. This being the state to which his aim was directed, he spared no pains to model himself according to the idea which he had formed of it. But every exertion proved abortive, and he found, that by the means he

pursued he came far short of that perfection to which he so ardently aspired. The disappointment occasioned great concern, and though discouraged by every attempt, he still renewed his efforts, till repeated experience convinced him that all his endeavours to obtain the proposed end could never succeed to his own satisfaction.

In September 1733, he was admitted to holy orders, and as soon as capable of holding a living, was instituted to that of Stanton-Harcourt, in the diocese of Oxford, where, residing in a sequestered village, he had too much time to indulge his speculative turn of mind, and where, his parochial duties being few, he had leisure to pursue his philosophical studies with little interruption. He loved retirement, and seldom went abroad. But whenever he could prevail upon himself to visit any of his friends and acquaintance, and among the rest his patron, Lord Harcourt, he was received with much respect, his company being very agreeable to all who knew him. And every one's curiosity was highly gratified, who could hear a man of the eighteenth century, converse like one of those of the second or third of the Christian era. In attending to that train of sentiment and reflection to which he had accustomed himself, they were led back to the distance of 1500 years, into the contemplations of axioms, sentences, and complete thoughts clothed in the most elegant dress of language, and the most delicate turn of expression. His abilities, both natural and acquired, were great, but his unfeigned humility was so apparent to every one with whom he conversed, that his

superior powers of pleasing excited no sensation of dislike in any. And his whole conduct was so inoffensive, that it is not known he ever made himself an enemy. His outward appearance was indeed very different from that of others, and a good taste, with a considerable degree of discernment, was requisite to see and esteem a person, who at first sight raised in common beholders a prejudice in his disfavour, seeming rather to be of a dull and reserved, than of a sociable and communicative disposition.

Among the several books which fell in his way, the writings of the late Professor Frank engaged his attention, and, as he expressed himself, turned his thoughts a little to our Saviour and his merits; but a subject of this sort made then so slight an impression on his mind, that he resumed his philosophical and Platonic kind of religion, wherein the imagination could amuse and entertain itself in high flights, deep speculations, intense reflections, and metaphysical reasonings, to which his natural disposition inclined him.

However, he did not give up so much of his time to these amusements as to neglect any part of his function; but very carefully performed every duty, which he thought incumbent upon him, as a parish minister, and lived on good terms with his parishioners, to whom he was intentionally as useful as his frame of mind and philosophical theology could make him. To this theory of religion he continued attached, though he had never derived that spiritual comfort which he expected from it. At length, when he found himself disappointed in the hope of

those attainments which he had been so long aiming at, and was discouraged and distressed by the unsuccessfulness of all his efforts, he had the happiness of becoming acquainted with the late Peter Boehler, in February 1737. This excellent man, who was a minister of the church known by the name of Unitas Fratrum, or United Brethren, and at that time waited for a ship, that was to carry him to America, in the capacity of a missionary, during his stay in England, came to the knowledge of some serious people in London, and with some well-disposed students in Oxford. There he was prevailed upon to hold private meetings for the edification of awakened people, both learned and unlearned. This he did in Latin, which, for the sake of the latter, the person who is the subject of this memorial, and who was one of the company, interpreted. On this occasion, and after some personal interviews with the Rev. Mr. Boehler, our late brother, (who proved afterwards a blessed instrument of service in the church of the Brethren) was impressed with such a deep conviction of his natural depravity, and of his utter inability to help himself, and at the same time with such a clear and enlivening view of the way of salvation, that he saw it necessary, and was encouraged by the hope of the gospel, to apply to the Throne of Grace without any other preparation than that of an humble and contrite spirit, relinquishing all attachment to, and reliance on, any thing but the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. It then appeared to him, that the chief point of Christianity, which every one who wishes to enjoy the benefit thereof, should be concerned to obtain,

was a lively faith in the Redeemer of the world, and, as a consequence thereof, the forgiveness of sins, a conquest over the corruption that naturally dwelleth in us, and a conformity of that state of mind which was in him. These privileges, he found by his own experience, were not to be attained by a legal strife, and the helps that human philosophy could administer; and was convinced that they were to be received freely by all that unfeignedly believe in Christ Jesus our Lord. This doctrine therefore, so full of comfort to the poor in spirit, he embraced with his whole heart, and all his philosophy yielded to it. The gloom, which like a thick cloud, had long enveloped and depressed his mind, was dissipated, and his spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour; he found that food which satisfies the hungry soul, and so great a change took place in him that he became a new creature, very different from what he had been before. But this happy alteration did not commence until he had undergone a long and severe trial, many struggles with his reasoning powers, and much embarrassment of thought; all of which proceeded from the repeated attempts that he had made to combine his philosophy with the simplicity of the gospel, which is intended not for the high-minded and self-sufficient, but for the meek and lowly in heart; for, as our Lord himself declares, The humbling truths thereof are hid from the wise and prudent in their own eyes, and revealed unto babes.

In the year 1739 he had the pleasure of seeing and conversing with the late Count Zinzendorf. This first interview with that servant of God fully

satisfied him of the falsity of those reports, which had been propagated to his discredit, and of the excellency of the person who had been so shamefully traduced. Soon after he gave the following description of the state of his own mind, and of the thoughts which he entertained of himself and the brethren, of whom he had gained some previous knowledge: "I then looked upon them as a happy people, and their doctrine as fundamentally true, but could not apply the comforts thereof to myself, being discouraged from so doing by the deep sense I had of my own guilt and depravity, and by being defeated in the hopes of being happy in the notions which I had formerly imbibed. Therefore I despaired of being in a condition better than the generality of mankind, or different from them. But in December, 1740, my younger brother, having been with the Brethren in London, came to see me. The account which he gave of the happy course he observed amongst them, struck me with such an agreeable surprise, that I could not but return with him thither. My design was to see the order established, and to feel the spirit which prevailed amongst them, where several of them dwelt together. The purpose of my visit was answered to my great satisfaction, and I could believe not only that they were right both in principle and practice, but that I might have a share of the same grace which they enjoyed. After having been again in their company, I perceived an impulse upon my mind to devote myself entirely to Him who died for me, and to live wholly for him and to his service." It appears, that in the interval between

the year 1737 and this time, many vicissitudes took place in his mind: the drawings of grace, which he felt, were frequently rendered ineffectual, and the light of the gospel, of which he had some transient views in its native simplicity, was as often clouded by perplexities of more elevated reasoning, which every man is apt to fall into, and finds no end, in wandering mazes lost, until he is so humbled as to suffer all his lofty imaginations to be cast down, and every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, to submit to be led into the way of salvation and continue therein, which is that of faith unfeigned in the blood of Jesus, who is made unto us by divine appointment, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. This he saw was the only way for self-condemned and repenting sinners to take, and the only thing that could make and keep them happy, while, as poor, needy, and sinful beings, they cleave unto Him and rely upon him for daily supplies of grace.

In this view of things, he found that his former notions could be of no avail, and was convinced, that the burden of sin, with which he was oppressed, could not be removed, nor his conscience purged from dead works to serve the living God, but by faith in Him who came into the world to save sinners. He was therefore aware of what he called his reason, and afraid of his old mystic thoughts, lest they should mislead him, as they had often done before. To avoid the danger of deception from this quarter, to which he was exposed by living too much alone in a retired village, he was fully persuaded, that a con-

nection with those who not only professed themselves Christians, but were such in reality, would be the means of preserving him from it; and as he had become acquainted with a society of true believers in London, who chose to be directed by the spirit and word of Christ, to be obedient to his will in all things, and to live together as persons wholly devoted to him; he wished that he also might have the favour of associating with true children of God, whose conversation might prevent his former gloomy reasoning from obtruding itself upon him, having experienced, in the space of several years, that it had led him astray and been a hinderance to him in attaining to a settled peace of mind. He remembered that he had first heard the joyful sound of the gospel from one of the Brethren, who represented it in its native simplicity, and was fully persuaded that he should become happy, if he could live in the constant enjoyment of that comfort which he then in some measure derived from it, and of which he had since, many cheering, but, through his own fault, only transient sensations. He therefore determined to leave his retired situation, where he could neither be of that service which he wished to be of to others, nor find the satisfaction he sought after for himself, and to take up his abode with those whom he believed to be a people of God, who through the influence of his Spirit, were led into the way of truth, and held the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace and in righteousness of life. To partake of their happiness, to live amongst them in love to Christ and to one another, and to unite with them in promoting the glory

of God and the good of mankind, was his desire. With this view, he applied to the United Brethren, disposed as a little child in distress for help, committed himself to their care and direction, and had no choice with regard to any station or office wherein he might be in future of use to others.

In the beginning of October 1742, he thus expressed himself upon this head. "Having had assurance that such a favour might be granted, I left my parish with a view to live wholly with the Brethren."

Before he quitted his parish, he wrote to the Bishop of Oxford, and to this kind patron Lord Harcourt. They expressed their concern at the step which he intended to take, and urged some reasons to induce him to change his purpose: but his resolution was fixed. He then resigned his living in due form; and after he had taken leave of his parishioners in a very respectful manner, he went to the Brethren and lived entirely with them. Upon this occasion he wrote in substance as follows, to his parishioners: "It is not in consequence of any resentment or of any worldly motive, that I give up my parish. I have not so implicitly given up my judgment to others as to be prevailed upon, by their persuasions, to take this step. The reason for my so doing is well-grounded and to my own satisfaction. It does not, I assure you, proceed from any dislike that I have to the worship of God in the Church of England. I find no fault with any passage or clause in the Common Prayer Book. Nor can I, in justice, be considered in the same light with such persons as slight and forsake one party of Christians, and go

over to another without sufficient cause. But that which has determined the choice I have made, was the earnest desire I found in myself, of that improvement in the knowledge of the gospel, and in the experience of the grace of Jesus Christ which I stood in need of. The blessings purchased by the blood of the Shepherd of our souls I longed to enjoy, in fellowship with a little flock of his sheep who daily feed on the merits of his passion, and whose great concern is to build up one another in their most holy faith, and to propagate the truth as it is in Jesus, for the good of others. His gracious presence, the power of his word, and the virtue of his blood, I wanted to have a more lively sense of, for my own comfort and support in the Christian warfare, and I had reason to hope for those means of happiness, especially where brethren dwell together in unity, for there the Lord commandeth his blessing and life for evermore. This is all I aim at in withdrawing myself from you, and may this my departure give no offence to any one. I now take my last adieu, and earnestly pray for you and for myself; for myself that I may be faithful to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and prove his servant truly devoted to him, where I am going; and may you, where you remain, be as obedient to the influence of his Spirit and the dictates of his word as I wish to be; so shall we one day rejoice before the great Shepherd of our souls, that merciful and compassionate Saviour, in whom there is, in the mean time, life, peace, and joy for all believers. I do not go from you because I cannot live in the Church of England, as an outward profes-

sion, or because I prefer any other form of ecclesiastical government before that which is by law established in this kingdom: but the inducement which leads me to this change, is the great concern I have for the attainment of a happy state of mind, and to compass this end, no means, through the blessing of God, appear to me so proper as a free intercourse with those who are of the same principles with my own, to whom I may communicate my thoughts without reserve: and from whom I can receive that assistance of advice and comfort, which is necessary for a person encompassed with such infirmities as I am. I heartily wish that you may derive more benefit from the instructions of my successor, than you have or could have done from mine, and I trust that this will be the case."

From the contents of this written message, the truth of an observation which he made in one of his letters to the Bishop, upon this occasion, is very evident, That one man may be a sectary with a sectarian spirit, in opposition to the established religion of his country, and without just ground for his separation from it; and another, at the same time that he has a real esteem for it, may do some things which have the appearance of a dissent from it, and yet have nothing against the rules and order which it prescribes, and can appeal to the Searcher of hearts for the uprightness of his intentions, as to essentials and circumstantials in the unity of the Spirit.

By quitting his station as a parish minister he did not mean either to show any disrespect to the Church of England, or to give offence to any member there-

of. Nor did he wish that his regard to her constitution should be considered as at all diminished by resigning the charge of his parish, and going to live with a people, whose fellowship he sought to enjoy for his spiritual benefit. His determination was, if employed in their connection, to devote himself to the service of the Lord of all, and to be fellow-labourer with them, with whom he could lay his favourite stress on the redemption by Jesus Christ without opposition. He did not join the Brethren's church as a religion of human establishment, though he honoured their episcopal succession, but as a house or family of God, united together for the only purpose of doing his work and promoting the cause of true Christianity in a free and unconfined manner. He highly prized the lot which he had obtained amongst them, much esteemed the good order which they observed, partook of their fellowship, bore his part of their burdens, did his share of the work, and being incorporated with them as well as ingrafted in Christ the true Vine; he, as a living branch thereof deriving sap from that source, bore much fruit to his glory.

After staying some time in London, he went in 1742 to assist in a boarding-school in Essex. In November the same year, he was regularly admitted a member of the Brethren's church. May 14, 1743, he was married to the present widow; resided in Wales, chiefly at Haverfordwest, where he kept a school, preached occasionally, and became acquainted with several people there, who have reason to bless God for his stay in their neighbourhood, which

was till November 1744, when he returned to London, where he continued until the beginning of the year 1747. He then accompanied some of his friends on a visit to Germany, arrived at Hernhaag, March 9, where he enjoyed many blessings in fellowship with the congregation settled there, and was respected and beloved by all. After several months continuance in that place, he came back to London with the same company, where he lived a considerable time in favour with God and man, and to the edification of all who heard him preach or conversed with him. Besides the public office of a minister, his attention was employed in writing and correcting several pieces for the press, such as the Maxims, &c. taken out of the Dissertations and Discourses of Count Zinzendorf, and other compositions of his own, which are a standing proof of his fine taste in evangelical truths, and of his clear understanding of the economy of grace under the New Testament. He wrote also an excellent tract or essay on the character of Count Zinzendorf, which was also published in the German language, in Mr. Spangenberg's Apologetical Writings. He was likewise useful in repeating extempore, in English, the sermons which the late Count preached in German, and the translation was so well performed, that every one who heard him, and understood both languages, wondered at the facility of his comprehension and the retentiveness of his memory. He revised several other books, namely, the Rationale of their Doctrine and Discipline, some apologetical writings, and the Greenland History. Besides these employments he was

eady to give assistance upon all occasions, whether f conference with his brethren, congregational meetngs, or private conversation with individuals who anted his advice, in which his meekness and wisdom, his charity and patience, were very conspicuous. In the year 1754, it being thought necessary to keep up a regular succession of ecclesiastical orders, he was, at a general conference of the several labourers in the congregations of the Brethren in England, chosen and consecrated a Bishop of the Unitas Fratrum. But with what humility and diffidence in himself did he accept this office! And in the exercise thereof no trace of any disposition was seen in him, but that of lowliness of mind, nor did he think himself thereby entitled to any greater respect than was due to any other of his brethren. As he would not have accepted it, had he not been earnestly requested to take it upon him by his brethren, so he had no other view in complying with their entreaties, than to be used as an instrument of keeping up the regularity of such ordinations as might be found necessary. Such a bishop would have been justly esteemed an honour to any church, whether ancient or modern, if disinterestedness of spirit, humility of mind, devotion of heart, a benevolent disposition towards all men, and a voluntary submission to the service not only of the church in general, but of every member thereof, though in the most inferior station, be the proper qualifications and distinguished ornaments of the Christian episcopacy.

These excellent endowments, which the grace of God had wrought in him, and enabled him to use

to his glory, made him greatly respected by all who knew him, and were capable of forming a right judgment of real worth and undissembled goodness. But neither the regard which was shown him, nor the rank which he held in the church, could alter that humble opinion he always entertained of himself. And such was the character he maintained in the situation assigned him, that he was deservedly esteemed, not only by those with whom he was connected, but by others of every denomination, who were acquainted with him.

From the year 1754 to 1764 he resided chiefly in London, employing himself in every branch of service for the congregation settled there, and in regular correspondence with all his fellow-labourers of the same communion in England. Herein he acted solely from a principle of love to the souls whom he had in charge, and received from them the most grateful returns of affection.

After this, he went to a general synod of the Brethren, which was held in the year 1764, in Germany, where he had the satisfaction of being present with many servants of God, assembled together for the promotion of true Christianity and the building up of each other in their most holy faith. There he was likewise much respected and beloved. From thence he came back to London, where he chiefly resided, till the year 1768, when he was seized with a dropsical asthma, which had such an effect upon his whole frame, that they who were about him apprehended that every day would be his last.

When there was some intermission of pain, though

e very sensibly felt the weakness of his constitution, nd had reason to believe that his existence in the ody would be of short continuance; yet being deirous of rendering the remaining part of it, in some neasure useful to others, he purposed to go into Wales: his view, in the change of his situation, was o be instrumental to the benefit of his countrymen. His friends being of opinion, that his native air would be of service to him, and having some hope that his usefulness might even yet be more extensive, encouraged the design he had formed in his own mind, and of which he had given them an intimation. In consequence of their concurrence and approbation, he removed to Haverfordwest, where he had the pecial care of the congregation settled in that place, nd the prospect of being helpful to many other wakened souls in those parts. At the same time, ome indications seemed to promise a better state of ealth, but these were only flattering, and the hopes f all, who had his recovery at heart, were soon fter, to their great regret, disappointed.

In a letter dated October 11, 1770, wherein he ssured his correspondent, that he was better with espect to the asthma, could lie down in the bed and get some sleep, he thus described the state in which e then was: "I ought to be thankful for every miigation of pain, but it becomes, I think, plainer han ever, that I have a real attack of the dropsy, hich whether I shall get the better of, or it, by and y, get the better of me, is a question. I totter on ny legs, and though I look pretty well, yet there re few intervals in the day wherein I have any thing

like strength either of body or mind. However, I set no bounds to my Saviour's power, if he sees it good to continue me here a little longer; but it is hardly to be any more expected in my case. I really do all I can to support my impaired constitution, and walk most days a little in the chapel or burying-ground, till I am ready to drop down. All that I can properly desire of my gracious Lord is, that he would be merciful to me an unworthy sinner, wash me from all my unfaithfulness and transgressions in his blood, keep me in communion with himself and his people, help me to behave rightly, at least not offensively, in my sickness, and be perceptibly near to me in my last hour, whenever it is to be."

It appeared from this letter, that the congregation committed to his charge, could not receive from him, in his infirm state, that service which was indispensably requisite: and as there was reason to fear that his concern for those intrusted to his care, would incline him to attempt more than he could perform, and by that means hasten his end; it was proposed, that he should change the place of his abode for another, where he might pass the remainder of his dying life, without any concern of mind relating to the duties of his office, and only enjoy the love of all about him. This offer was agreeable to his own choice. And he was so much respected and beloved, by all who knew his personal qualities, that any of his friends in the neighbourhood, would have given him the kindest reception, and have considered it, as a privilege, to do all in their power to administer to his service and comfort. But upon farther consideration on this proposal, he wrote

to his friends in London to this purpose: "I am fully convinced, that what has been proposed with regard to me proceeded from a very kind intention to make all things as convenient for me as possible. For these affecting proofs of Christian love, I shall retain, to my latest breath, a deep sense of gratitude. But some circumstances have just now occurred to me, which render it a matter of doubt, whether I should leave my station, or make a further trial of my abilities, with the assistance which is at hand, that the regular course of service, for the souls under my care, may be continued without intermission, till I depart this life.

In another letter, dated July 28, 1771, which was his last, he declared the situation of his mind to the following effect: "The writing of the few lines before the present, was the work of several days, attended with more difficulty and pain than any one is able to conceive, who does not feel what I have suffered. But to complain is disagreeable to me. The constant prayer of my heart, most tenderly united with yours, is for the welfare and prosperity of the church of God, and especially that part of it, which is the immediate object of our care. May our faithful and best Friend, who purchased it with his blood, and is the supreme head thereof, so defend his people amidst all opposition, and support his servants, who labour in the word and doctrine, and have the general charge over his house, that the several members of it may increase in faith, hope, and love, to their comfort and joy.

"With respect to myself, if I may judge from

what I feel, I can think no otherwise than that I am very near the end of my course. Therefore all my prayers were centered in this, that my gracious Lord may wash me, a sinner, in his blood, and abide always near me, especially in my last extremity."

From his whole demeanour in every stage of his illness, it appeared, that he had, in a great degree, the same mind which was in his Lord and Master. In those intervals, wherein he was in some measure, free from pain, and was thereby enabled to perform any part of his ministerial function, whether he preached to a public auditory, or explained the Scriptures to a private company, he approved himself to all who heard him, a scribe well instructed unto the kingdom of heaven. The Bible he esteemed above all other books, and from that sacred volume, as his most important treasure, he drew the spirit as well as matter of all his discourses. From this standard of divine truth his doctrine never varied, and his practice was a living sermon on the truths he taught. The last subject whereof he treated with more than usual energy and edification to his hearers, was, "Set your affections on things above," &c. The exhortation herein given was exemplified in his own disposition and conduct. For as the love of heaven had made him heavenly, and the desire to be with him, who endured the cross for him, and was therefore his great object, had disengaged his heart from all earthly attachments, so his benevolence prompted him to do good to all within the compass of his influence. Among the many instances of persons in affliction to whom he had been an instrument of help

and comfort, was one involved in distress of the most complicated nature, whose dejected mind, by his compassionate attention, was so much relieved, and animated with an assured hope of a speedy dismission from pain and grief to endless joy and rest, that all, who were concerned for and sympathized with the sufferer, rejoiced on his account, and it was said by some, that if his benefactor had come into those parts for his sake alone, the service done with respect to him, would have well answered the expense and trouble of his journey thither.

His sphere of usefulness was contracted in proportion to the increase of his disorder. But however limited in his influence, as far as it reached, he lost no opportunity of comforting the poor and dejected, and to intercede for the friendless. Upon the least intermission of pain, he was always ready to converse with those about him upon the most interesting subjects, for their edification and comfort. The great concern of his mind and heart was for the furtherance of the gospel, for the church in general, and for that part of it which was under his immediate care, that it might grow in grace, and be enlarged by countless numbers to the praise of its Redeemer. With the same solicitude for the benefit of his countrymen at large, he not only drew up some remarks on the Welch tongue, and grammatical institutions in that language, for the use of English preachers, who living amongst them, must speak so as to be understood, but offered many prayers at the throne of grace in their behalf, which, there is no doubt, will sooner or later be answered. From the nature of

his disorder, which, becoming more and more oppressive, scarce allowed him any sleep, he was apprehensive, that he should be deprived of the use of his mental faculties; but knowing in whom he believed, he, with full resignation, committed himself to his care, and perceiving that they, who were with him were affected at the prospect of such an event, he said, "All he does is well done; let us only look to him, and the end will be blessed." If at any time, through extreme pain, a word of complaint fell from him, which very rarely happened, upon recollection he acknowledged the impropriety of it, saying, I ought not to speak so, it might be much worse with me, I am graciously dealt with: which was generally his answer to those who asked him how he did. At the last communion, which he attended in public, on Sunday, September 8, he partook of that sacred ordinance with the humility and reverence which becomes a sinner in the presence of God his Saviour, and at the same time with the unshaken confidence in his mercy, which is peculiar to the true believer. In singing, at the conclusion of this awful solemnity, a verse of praise and thanksgiving, which he began himself, the communicants were impressed with such a lively sense of that peace which the world cannot give, that many grateful tears flowed from every eye in the happy assembly.

When, through an entire weakness of body, he could no longer attend the congregation, such a measure of grace was bestowed upon him, that his private conversation with all who visited him, had the most happy and beneficial influence upon their minds.

His thoughts were constantly employed in the things of God, and the concerns of his church; so that, what he said upon all occasions was so interesting, that every one who heard him, and whose memory could not retain the particulars of what had been spoken, lamented afterwards, that he had not preserved in writing what well deserved to be remembered.

Being always ready to acknowledge the least assistance received from others, he could not sufficiently thank those about him for the kind offices they had done him, and particularly his dear wife, for the great faithfulness she had shown, and the tender nursing care with which he had been attended by her in every stage of his illness. In this benevolent and grateful state of mind, he passed the remainder of his life here below. As long as the ability of utterance lasted, whoever came near him in the daytime, or watched with him in the night, was sensibly affected with what, out of the fulness of his heart, his mouth spake. He expressed, as well as he was able, the living sense he had of the undeserved mercy of God, and of the unlimited kindness of his friends; giving them the most salutary advice for their spiritual improvement: and singing with a cheerful, though faltering tone of voice, verses of praise and adoration to him who had redeemed and washed him from his sins in his own blood.

At length, when he seemed no more to have the power of speech, he lay still; and it appeared to them who were present with him, that the awful minute of expiration drew near. For a while he was scarce perceived to breathe, but all at once he exerted the

feeble efforts of dissolving nature to speak his ea
nest desire to be at home with his most gracio
Lord; and just before the close of all his suffering
was heard to pray with emphasis in these word
"Dear Saviour! remember my poor name, an
come, come soon." Shortly after his petition w
granted, and he whom his soul loved, took him in
his eternal security, September 13, 1771. The wi
nesses of his happy departure, were struck with
reverential sensation of the peace of God on this o
casion. His residence here on earth lasted six
years. He left two children behind him, a son an
a daughter, who, with his widow, are still living.

To show the members of the established churc
in a striking point of view, the treasure of sou
doctrine contained in the Book of Common-Praye
and to endear to them that ancient formulary of pu
lic devotions, he published in the year 1765, wit
out his name, "A short Summary of Christia
Doctrine, by way of question and answer, the a
swers being all made in the sound and scriptur
words of the Church of England.

He also composed several hymns expressive
the situation and desires of his own heart, which a
inserted in the brethren's hymn book. These, wi
other pieces, which he wrote in verse or prose at di
ferent periods of his life, and have been separatel
published, are collected in the subsequent pages.

It is hoped, that every one who reads the prece
ing narrative, and the several successive parts of th
volume, may, by the blessing of God, derive bot
profit and pleasure of the best sort from the perusa

there is no reason to apprehend, that the can-
well-disposed, who shall pay due attention
which is contained herein, will be disappointed
mprovement in grace and knowledge, which
rough the Spirit of Truth, may wish to re-
om the writings of a man, who, though he
essed of such mental powers as too often be-
esteem, yet was distinguished for meekness
ility, which accompanied him to the last mo-
his life. His invariable concern was not
give no offence to any, but to do good, as
was enabled, to all men; and his greatest
maintain with tender fidelity that connection
which he enjoyed with God his Saviour, by
utiously observant of his will, and constantly
l in preserving the grace given him as the
treasure.

THE

MARTYRDOM

OF

ST. IGNATIUS.

PREFACE.

THER the reverend Author of the following
ever intended it for publication is not known.
ich is certain, that for some years before his
e he was not even possessed of a copy of it;
it of his peculiar modesty, and perhaps because
ew it was not perfect, according to the gene-
eceived rules of the drama, and for some other
s, he wished that it had not strayed, in manu-
into the hands of some of his friends, who
it highly, not only on account of their esteem
Author, but for its own excellence in point
timent.

ose who had the happiness to be intimately
nted with the author, knew that he was of a
tudious turn of mind, and could not be satis-
ith the surface and appearance of things, but
eagerly after useful and necessary truth, and
wearied in his researches. This induced him
ly to read with great attention the Holy Scrip-
but to study the fathers of the first centuries,
ng that in them he should find the strongest
s of the Christian religion, and the fullest

proofs of what was the doctrine, discipline, and temper of the Christian church, at and immediately after the times of the apostles.

He was at a certain time so given up, if we may thus express it, to the company of the fathers, and so taken with their manners, that he unintentionally became in his way of thinking, speaking and acting, as though he had lived in the first or second century, and in the closest intimacy with Ignatius, Polycarp, and others.

He had in his youth a great fondness for dramatic pieces, both ancient and modern; and though we cannot find that he ever frequented the theatres any where, yet looking upon dramatic writings as a pleasing and impressive manner of conveying ideas and actions to others, we suppose he formed the plan of giving, if not to the public, yet to some of his friends, a representation of the state, principles, and practice of the Christians in the first and second century, in a dramatic composition.

He certainly believed, that a piece, wherein the love of Christ, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, is set forth as producing the most excellent principles in the human soul, devotion to God, love to our neighbours, humility, forbearance, aptness to forgive, yea, to love and bless even bitter, active, and powerful enemies, would be more suited and edifying to a Christian reader, than such as are too much *in vogue* to the reproach of Christianity; in which, lust, pride, and ambition, are called in to assist in the production of something, like virtue, but which cannot be worthy of that name, when proceeding from such vile and poisoned sources.

Our author, in writing this tragedy, adhered to history, and has therefore attended Ignatius at Antioch, and from thence to Rome, by the same road which he travelled. He has given him the same company which he then had; and has presented Ignatius, Polycarp, and the bishops and deacons who attended at Smyrna to our view, in such a clear and lively manner, that we are brought into their company, and hear them speak the sentiments written in the epistles of Ignatius and Polycarp, and see them act agreeable to the most authentic accounts which are handed down to us, of what passed at that time; and the whole performance is so adapted to the spirit of that period, that there is hardly any thing that can be called his but the dress.

What Ignatius speaks to the Romans in the tragedy, is only a version of what he wrote to the Christians at Rome.

The reasonings of the two philosophers for and against the Christian scheme may be difficult for some readers to understand, but bespeak the genius of the most candid and upright of that class of men in those later times. We wish that the philosophers of our day were always willing to discuss the essential tenets of Christianity with the same openness, and to receive the force of truth, grounded upon experience: then would the supercilious sneer of contempt, and the prompt rejection of Christianity at the first mentioning of it, give way to, at least, a mild and tolerant temper.

We do not present this to the public as a perfect dramatic performance; we are sensible it will not

bear, in all respects, to be examined by the strict rules of criticism. The author has not attended to unity of time and place; but for this he will not be blamed by the admirers of Shakespeare, or by those who have read the fine tragedies of Jephthah and of John Baptist, by Buchanan. He takes no pains to render the plot intricate, and then to unravel and wind it up, so as to leave the mind filled with amazement at the event; but he follows history, without seeking to awaken the passions, or surprise by uncommon incidents; and yet it is to be hoped, that some will feel many passages and incidents powerfully and usefully. Had our author himself published it, we are persuaded he would have given it a finishing which it cannot get now.

As this piece is therefore not presented to the public as a complete dramatic composition, it can afford no employment for critics in this point of view. And as to those who may be offended with the general scope of this performance, and the general tendency of the doctrines it enforces by no fictitious examples, but with historical faithfulness, they must employ their critical abilities, not on the author, but on the fathers, and even on the apostles themselves; for we cannot help lamenting that the cross, or the power of the incarnation, sufferings, and death of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was, is, and will be, alas! to many foolishness; but to others who are and shall be saved, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

The reason that this piece is now published is this: sundry copies of it have been procured by dif-

ferent persons, and some of them are very imperfect. Many, who have read it, have urged that it might be printed; and we were not without apprehensions that it would sooner or later be published from some imperfect or erroneous copy, or by some one who might mar by attempts to mend, and we have seen some such copies: therefore we rather choose to publish our author as we found him, with the hope that it will be of some use and a blessing to many, by their not only reading, but feeling something of the spirit of the first Christians. The operations and fruits of that Spirit that glorifies Jesus, must be the same in all periods of time to the end of the world.

As many readers may be unacquainted with the life of Ignatius, we have given some account of this blessed martyr, from the best authorities; and also, of Polycarp, who is so often mentioned, and is a principal character in the tragedy.

SOME ACCOUNT

OF

ST. IGNATIUS.

what parents Ignatius sprung, is not told us; it certain where he was born, but this honour ɜn ascribed to Nora in Sardinia.

ɜre is a tradition that he was the little child our blessed Lord and Saviour set before the ɜs, when he told them, that "Except they ɔnverted, and became as little children, they not enter into the kingdom of heaven." But proofs handed down to us are not sufficient to ticate this relation, we cannot deliver it as a ıor is it material to our purpose, as the intenonly to give, from the best authorities, some t of what the grace of God made Ignatius to Christian, a bishop, and a martyr.

s appears certain, that he was contemporary rticularly acquainted with the apostles of our and received instructions from those first and l messengers of God our Saviour, and that Polycarp were more especially disciples of ın.

Having approved himself as a Christian indeed, and as a devoted and anointed servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, he was, upon the decease of Euodius, chosen by the apostles bishop of Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, and was consecrated thereunto by them with imposition of hands.

Thus he must have continued many (it is said forty) years in this important function; and we are told, by those who attended him to his martyrdom at Rome, and who gave an account of his death, that "he was a man in all things like unto the apostles;" so that he must have been, in all respects, a worthy and venerable bishop, approving himself in the sight of all men as a faithful steward over the household of God; and that he was, as is said of him, "like a divine lamp illuminating the hearts of the faithful by his exposition of the Holy Scriptures."

That he was clothed with humility, appears from all his epistles; for though so highly esteemed as a faithful shepherd and bishop, and on the way to receive that which was, in those days, esteemed the highest possible honour that a human creature and an heir of grace could possess, the crown of martyrdom; yet, in writing to the Romans, Smyrnæans, and others, concerning the church of Syria, he says of himself, "I am even ashamed to be reckoned as one of them; for neither am I worthy, being the least among them, and as one born out of due season. But through mercy I have obtained to be somebody, if I shall get to God."

That the love of God was shed abroad in his

heart by the Holy Ghost, is evident from all he has written. The work of redemption by the incarnation, life, suffering, and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his resurrection for our justification, being deeply impressed on his heart by the Holy Ghost, made him a living witness of the power of the great salvation to all around him, and a constant inculcator of the redemption in Christ's blood.

We must not expect to find in those of his epistles which are extant, a regular system of divinity. He wrote letters to several churches, and to Polycarp, when he was hurried to Rome under a guard of rude soldiers: we therefore find, that although the great and fundamental truths of the Gospel are asserted throughout his epistles, yet he only wrote about such cases as related to their and his own circumstances at that time.

As the spirit of Jesus infuses love, meekness, forbearance, and the most real concord and union, so he, as a disciple of St. John, who learned it on the breast of his gracious Master, earnestly exhorted the churches to remain in brotherly love and union of heart. Thus, in his epistle to the Magnesians, he writes, "I salute the churches: wishing in them an union both of the body and spirit of Jesus Christ, our eternal life." Again, "I exhort you to do all things in a divine concord.—Let no one look upon his neighbour after the flesh; but do you all mutually love each other in Jesus Christ." Again, "Being come together in the same place, have one common prayer; one supplication; one mind; one hope; in love, and in joy undefiled. There is one Lord

Jesus Christ, than whom nothing is better. Wherefore come ye all together as unto one temple of God; as to one altar, as to one Jesus Christ, who proceeded from one Father, and exists in one, and is returned to one." The Trallians he exhorts to "love every one his brother with an unfeigned heart." To the Philadelphians he writes, "Come altogether into one place with an undivided heart;" and he speaks out of the same spirit in all his epistles.

As this was a subject which he urged agreeable to the mind of his Lord and Master, so he was fired with holy indignation against all those who sought to foment dissensions, by introducing doctrines contrary to the mind of Christ. He tells the Ephesians, "There are some who carry about the name of Christ in deceitfulness, but do things unworthy of God; these ye must flee, as ye would so many wild beasts: for they are ravening dogs, who bite secretly: against whom you must guard yourselves as men hardly to be cured. Wherefore let no one deceive, as indeed neither are ye deceived, being wholly the servants of God. For inasmuch as there is no contention among you, which can trouble you, ye must needs live according to God's will." To the Trallians he writes, "Stop your ears, therefore, as often as any one shall speak contrary to Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, of the virgin Mary." To the Philadelphians, "As becomes the children both of the light and of the truth, flee divisions and false doctrines: but where your shepherd is, there do ye, as sheep, follow after. For there are many wolves who seem worthy of

belief, that, with a false pleasure, lead captive those that run in the course of God; but in your concord they shall find no place. Be not deceived, brethren: if any one follows him that maketh a schism in the church, he shall not inherit the kingdom of God. If any walks after any other opinion, he agrees not with the passion of Christ. Love unity: flee divisions: be the followers of Christ as he was of the Father. Where there is division and wrath, God dwelleth not."

From hence, and many other passages in his epistles, it appears evident that there were in his days, as there had been even in the time of the apostles, men of corrupt minds, who sowed seeds of dissension among the children of God, and who turned the grace of God into licentiousness; and that he saw, beforehand, reason to caution the Christians against such who should arise, perverting the truth, or holding it in unrighteousness; touching whom, he tells the Trallians, "That such confound together the doctrine of Jesus Christ with their own poison, whilst they seem worthy of belief, as men give a deadly poison mixed with sweet wine, which he, who is ignorant of it, does, with the treacherous pleasure, sweetly drink in his own death." He adds, "Wherefore guard yourselves against such persons; and that ye will do, if ye are not puffed up." Of such deceivers he says, in his epistle to the Ephesians, "Those that corrupt families by adultery, shall not inherit the kingdom of God. If therefore they, who do this according to the flesh, have suffered death; how much more shall he die,

who by his wicked doctrine corrupts the faith of God, for which Christ was crucified? He that is thus defiled shall depart into unquenchable fire, and so he that hearkens unto him."

He warns the Philadelphians against those who preach the Jewish law, and adds, "For it is better to receive the doctrine of Christ from one that has been circumcised, than Judaism from one that has not. But if either the one or the other do not speak concerning Jesus Christ, they seem to me to be but as monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are only written the names of men. Flee therefore the wicked arts and snares of the prince of this world, lest at any time being oppressed by his cunning, ye grow cold in your love."

It is evident that he had to combat against various kinds of corrupters of the word of life, and particularly also against those who opposed the ground of our salvation, the reality of the incarnation, sufferings, and death of God our Saviour. These held, that our blessed Lord did not take on him true flesh, nor suffered really, but only in appearance, and their principles led them to all looseness and libertinism. With a view to this horrible heresy, which, with many others, began to show their heads in the east, he writes to the Smyrnæans, "I have observed that you are settled in an immoveable faith, as if you were nailed to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, both in the flesh and in the spirit; and are confirmed in love through the blood of Christ; being fully persuaded of those things which relate unto our Lord, who truly was of the race of David according to the

flesh, but the Son of God according to the will and power of God; truly born of the virgin and baptized of John, that so all righteousness might be fulfilled by him. He was also truly crucified by Pontius Pilate, and Herod the tetrarch, being nailed for us in the flesh; by the fruits of which we are, even by his most blessed passion, that he might set up a token for all ages through his resurrection, to all his holy and faithful servants, whether they be Jews or Gentiles, in one body of his church.

" Now all these things he suffered for us, that we might be saved. And he suffered truly, as he also truly raised up himself: and not as some unbelievers say, that he only seemed to suffer, they themselves only seeming to be. And as they believe, so shall it happen unto them; when being divested of the body they shall become mere spirits.

" But I know that even after his resurrection he was in the flesh; and I believe that he is still so. And when he came to those who were with Peter, he said, Take, handle me, and see that I am not incorporeal. And straightway they felt him, and believed, being convinced both by his flesh and spirit. For this cause they despised death, and were above it. But after his resurrection he did eat and drink with them, as he was flesh; although, as to his spirit, he was united to his Father.

" Now these things I put you in mind of, not questioning but that you yourselves believe that they are so. But I arm you beforehand against certain beasts in the shape of men, whom you must not only not receive, but, if it be possible, not meet

with." However, he exhorts them to pray for their repentance.

It is evident that he looked upon the manifestation of God in the flesh, and his living, suffering and dying the accursed death of the cross for us, as the great and effectual cause of our salvation, of the union between Christ and his members, and of the oneness of the individuals with him and with each other, by constant declarations to this effect. In his epistle to the Ephesians he says, "Let my life be sacrificed for the doctrine of the cross, which is indeed a scandal to unbelievers, but to us is salvation and eternal life. Where is the wise man? Where is the disputer? Where is the boasting of those who are called wise? For our God, Jesus Christ, was, according to the dispensation of God, conceived in the womb of Mary of the seed of David, by the Holy Ghost."

Speaking farther on this subject, he says that this new star shone and sent out its light above all other stars. "Hence," says he, "all the power of magic was dissolved, and every band of wickedness was destroyed; men's ignorance was taken away, and the old kingdom abolished: God himself appearing, in the form of a man for the renewal of eternal life." To the Philadelphians he writes, after speaking of those who, out of strife and a spirit of criticism, rejected or perverted the gospel, "To me Jesus Christ is instead of all the uncorrupted monuments in the world: together with those undefiled monuments, his cross, and death, and resurrection, and the faith which is by him; by which I desire, through your

prayers to be justified." In his address to the church at Tralles in Asia, he calls them, "Beloved of God the Father of Jesus Christ, elect, and worthy of God, having peace through the flesh, and blood, and passion of Jesus Christ our hope, in the resurrection which is by him." In his salutation to the church of Philadelphia, he says that it "has obtained mercy, being fixed in the concord of God, and rejoicing evermore in the passion of our Lord, and being fulfilled in all mercy through his resurrection: which," he adds, "I salute in the blood of Jesus Christ, which is our eternal and undefiled joy." In his epistle to the Smyrnæans he writes, "I salute your very worthy bishop, and your venerable presbytery, and your deacons my fellow-servants, and all you in general, and every one in particular, in the name of Jesus Christ, and in his flesh, and blood, and in his passion and resurrection, both bodily and spiritually, and in the unity of God with you."

Thus the stupendous work of redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ was to him the foundation of all hope, and the root from whence every happy principle in the heart, and every good fruit in the walk and conversation of man must spring. Yet far from looking upon Christianity as the philosophers did upon their systems, as a matter of pleasing speculation only, he knew it to be powerfully operative. He therefore says, in his epistle to the Ephesians, "Christianity is not the work of an outward profession, but shows itself in the power of faith, if a man be found faithful unto the end." And to the Romans he says, "A Christian is not a work of

opinion, but of greatness of mind." He therefore, writing to the Ephesians, recommends faith and love, which, he says, "are the beginning and end of life: for faith is the beginning, and the end is love; and these two joined together are of God: but all other things, which concern a holy life, are the consequences of these." He therefore exhorts, "Let us do all things as becomes those who have God dwelling in them, that we may be his temples, and he our God." To the Trallians he writes, "Whereas ye are subject to your bishop as to Jesus Christ, ye appear to me to live not after the manner of men, but according to Jesus Christ, who died for us, that so believing in his death, ye might escape death."

Besides his instructions to love one another, he exhorts the Ephesians to "pray without ceasing for other men; for," he adds, "there is hope of repentance in them, that they may attain unto God. Let them therefore at least be instructed by your works, if they will be no other way. Be ye mild at their anger, humble at their boasting: to their blasphemies, return your prayers; to their error your firmness in the faith: when they are cruel, be ye gentle; not endeavouring to imitate their ways; let us be their brethren in all kindness and moderation, but let us be followers of the Lord; for who was ever more unjustly used, more destitute, more despised? that so no herb of the devil may be found in you: but you may remain in all holiness and sobriety, both of body and spirit, in Christ Jesus."

From hence, and much more which we might add from his own words, it is obvious what was the spi-

rit, temper, and walk of Ignatius, who was well aware of the insufficiency of words, and the necessity of reality, as he says to the Ephesians, "It is better for a man to hold his peace, and be, than to say he is a Christian, and not to be. It is good to teach, if what he says he does likewise." And again, he saith, "No man professing a true faith, sinneth; neither does he who has love, hate any. The tree is made manifest by its fruits: so they, who profess themselves to be Christians, are known by what they do."

We cannot discover his character and conduct as a bishop, better than by the advice which he gives his beloved brother, co-disciple, and afterwards fellow martyr, Polycarp; as a sketch of the tenor of his own temper and walk in that important function, he writes:

"I beseech thee, by the grace of God, with which thou art clothed, to press forward in thy course, and to exhort all others that they may be saved. Maintain thy place with all care, both of body and spirit: make it thy endeavour to preserve unity, than which nothing is better. Bear with all men, even as the Lord with thee. Support all in love, as also thou dost. Pray without ceasing. Ask more understanding than what thou already hast. Be watchful, having thy spirit always awake. Speak with every one according as God shall enable thee. Bear the infirmities of all, as a perfect combatant. If thou shalt love the good disciples what thanks is it? but rather do thou subject in meekness those that are mischievous. Every wound is not healed by the same plaster: if the accessions of the disease be ve-

hement, mollify them with soft remedies: be in all things wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove. Be sober as a combatant of God. Let not those that seem worthy of credit, but teach other doctrines, disturb thee. Stand firm and immoveable as an anvil when it is beaten upon. It is the part of a combatant to be wounded, and yet to overcome."

Here we may see the picture of Ignatius as a bishop. He exhorts all the churches to whom he wrote, to love, honour, and obey their bishops, presbyters, and deacons, as highly necessary for their own edification, the maintaining of unity, and preventing the machinations of Satan.

He had a foreboding and earnest desire to become a martyr, and wished for nothing more than to seal with his death the truth of the Gospel, to which he had borne such a loud and convincing testimony for so many years. However, he escaped the storms of the various persecutions under Domitian, although he withstood the raging flood, by supporting and strengthening those who were ready to sink in these times of trial, and such who were not as yet well grounded in the faith.

Though the church at Antioch, and throughout all Syria, certainly rejoiced at his being still left among them, as one who fed the church of God which he had purchased with his own blood; and he rejoiced greatly himself, when the persecution abated, at the tranquillity of his church; yet he was troubled as to himself, that he had not been thought worthy to suffer for his Lord, as though he had not attained to a true love of Christ, nor was come up to the pitch

of a perfect disciple. Continuing therefore some years longer with his church, as a faithful and approved shepherd, he at length attained to the summit of his wishes.

Trajan, in the nineteenth year of his empire, coming from his conquest of the Scythians and Dacians, and many other nations, looked upon it as needful to the rendering his dominion absolute and universal, to subdue the spirit of the Christians, and oblige them "to worship the devil, with all other nations." The persecution was renewed; and fear came upon the Christians, as they must either sacrifice or die. On this account our valiant soldier of Jesus Christ, being in fear for the church of Antioch, and hoping thereby to avert the storm, was voluntarily brought before Trajan, who was then at Antioch in his way to Armenia and the Parthians, against whom he was hastening.

Being come into the presence of Trajan, the emperor said unto him,

What a wicked wretch art thou, thus to endeavour to transgress our commands, and to persuade others also to do the like, to their destruction!

Ignatius answered: No one ought to call Theophorus after such a manner: forasmuch as all wicked spirits are departed far from the servants of God. But if because I am a trouble to these evil spirits, you call me wicked, with reference to them, I confess the charge: For having within me Christ the heavenly King, I dissolve all the snares of those devils.

TRAJAN replied: And who is Theophorus?

IGNATIUS. He who has Christ in his breast.

TRAJAN. And do not we then seem to thee to have the gods within us, who fight for us against our enemies?

IGNATIUS. You err in that you call the evil spirits of the heathen gods; for there is but one God, who made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that are in them: and one Jesus Christ his only begotten Son; whose kingdom may I enjoy!

TRAJAN. His kingdom you say, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?

IGNATIUS. His, who crucified my sin, with the inventor of it, and has put all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry him in their heart.

TRAJAN. Dost thou then carry him that was crucified within thee?

IGNATIUS. I do; for it is written, "I will dwell in them and walk in them."

Then Trajan pronounced this sentence against him:

"Forasmuch as Ignatius has confessed that he carried about within himself Him that was crucified, we command that he be carried bound by soldiers to Great Rome, there to be thrown to the beasts, for the entertainment of the people."

When the holy martyr heard this sentence, he cried out with joy, "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast vouchsafed to honour me, with a perfect love towards Thee, and hast made me to put on iron bonds with thy apostle Paul."

Having said this, he with joy put on his bonds:

and having first prayed for the church, and commended it with tears unto the Lord, he was hurried away, by the brutish soldiers, in order to his being carried to Rome, there to be devoured by the blood-thirsty beasts.

Many have expressed their surprise, and sought for the reasons which induced the emperor to send this person, loaded with years, such a long and irksome journey, to meet a death which could have been inflicted upon him at Antioch. Whether this was done out of a kind of humanity (for Trajan was in general not inhuman) that he might have time to consider of the terrible death he was to die, and through fear, and by being harassed by the inconveniences and afflictions he should be exposed to on the road, he might be induced to renounce the faith, and to sacrifice to idols; by which means also Trajan would have obtained a complete victory, and be enabled to lead in triumph, to the temples of the idols, a man, a bishop, who had been so many years one of the brightest ornaments, and a pillar of the church. Or whether, as it is said, he was advised by the senate to pass this sentence, lest, by his being put to death at Antioch, he should be rendered still dearer to the people there. Whatever may have been the reason, there seems evidently a hand of divine providence in it, as he became a living witness and monument of the grace and salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ wherever he came; encouraging the bishops and ministers, and giving the most lively exhortations, and administering consolation to the churches, not only to those through which he passed,

but by his epistles to those round about. By this means we have also a specimen and taste of the spirit of that period of the church.

He left Antioch, and entered upon his journey with joy, and greatly desirous to suffer, and came to Seleucia; sailing from thence, after great fatigue, he arrived at Smyrna; where, leaving the ship, he hastened to see Polycarp, his fellow scholar, who was bishop there. For, in the relation of his martyrdom, it is added, "They had both of them been formerly the disciples of St. John."

His joy was great to meet again and converse with his beloved Polycarp, which appears from what he writes to Polycarp, after their interview, from Troas: "I exceedingly give thanks that I have been thought worthy to behold thy blessed face, in which may I always rejoice in God!" In this meeting, it is said that Ignatius communicated some spiritual gifts to Polycarp, and gloried in his bonds. He also, in his epistle to Polycarp, seems to intimate to him, that he (Polycarp) should attain to the crown of martyrdom, by telling him, "That he should also be a combatant of God:" the crown proposed to him being immortality and eternal life; and adds, "Concerning which thou art also fully persuaded, I will be thy surety in all things, and my bonds, which thou hast loved."

The great esteem in which he was held by the churches was such, that they sent deputies from the churches and cities in Asia to attend and comfort him, and to receive some advantages by his communicating unto them those gifts of grace which he par-

took of in such an abundant measure. And we find this deputation was of such a nature, that the churches are said to have attended him by their bishops, and priests, and deacons. Of those with him at Smyrna, we find the following expressly mentioned in his epistles: "Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus," touching whom he writes to the Ephesians, "who by inexpressible love is ours;" and stiles him "an excellent bishop."

Damas, bishop of Magnesia, concerning whom he exhorts the Magnesians "not to use him too familiarly on account of his youth, but to yield all reverence to him; as I perceive (adds he) that your holy presbyters do, not considering his age, which is indeed young, but as becomes those who are prudent in God, submitting to him, or rather not unto him, but to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the bishop of us all." Polybius, bishop of Tralles, of whom he writes to the Trallians; "In effect I saw your whole church in him. I seemed to find you, as also I knew that ye were the followers of God." And again, "I have received and even now have with me the pattern of your love in your bishop; whose very look is instructive, and whose mildness powerful: whom I am persuaded the very atheists themselves cannot but reverence:" so that besides himself and Polycarp, these bishops are mentioned by him as being with him at Smyrna. Of presbyters, we find the following mentioned, Bassus, and Apollonius of Magnesia; and of deacons, Burrhus, Euplus, and Fronto of Smyrna, Ephesus and Sotio of Magnesia, besides the presbyters and deacons of

Smyrna, and probably from other churches, whose names are not mentioned. Indeed it seems, by what is written, as if there was a general convocation of the churches in Asia; and we may suppose that there were some even from Rome, as we find he writes his epistle from thence to the Romans, with the direct intention to prevent their taking any steps to hinder the execution of Trajan's sentence. "Moreover," he writes to the Romans, "there is now with me Crocus, most beloved of me. As for those which are come from Syria, and are gone before me to Rome to the glory of God, I suppose you are not ignorant of them."

We must still add to the number of those with him at Smyrna, Philo, the deacon of Cilicia, of whom he says, in his epistle from Troas to the Philadelphians, that he was "a most worthy man; he still ministers unto me in the word of God, together with Rheus of Agathopolis, a singular good person, who has followed me from Syria, not regarding his life." He also mentions them honourably in his epistle to the Smyrnæans. These two seem to have been his constant companions and attendants on this his uncouth pilgrimage, and even to his death.

In this assembly of the bishops, presbyters, deacons, and brethren from so many churches, he first of all entreated the whole church, but more particularly Polycarp, to contend with God in his behalf, that, being suddenly taken by the beasts from the world, he might appear before the face of Christ. We may naturally suppose that he then recommended to Polycarp and to the assembly, that they would

take care of his church, and see that it was provided with a worthy successor. This was evidently a subject of their conference, as he urges it in all his epistles. He writes from Troas to Polycarp as follows: "It will be very fit, O most worthy Polycarp, to call a select council, and choose some one whom ye particularly love, and who is patient of labour, that he may be the messenger of God; and that, going to Syria, he may glorify your incessant love to the praise of Christ. A Christian has not the power of himself, but must be always at leisure for God's service. Now this work is both God's and your's, when ye shall have perfected it." In his letters to the other churches, he desires them to send delegates from thence to Antioch, on the one hand to comfort, and on the other to congratulate his flock on account of the abatement of the persecution, of which he had heard on the way, to his great joy: and he requests Polycarp to write to the same effect to those churches to which he himself could not write.

Thus, with a terrible death in view, and to which he was hastening, in the midst of all the distressing circumstances attending his irksome journey, and his being hurried and seized by his savage guards; yea, and in the enjoyment of the love of his brethren, he could not forget his dearly-beloved flock, which not man, but God had committed to his charge. We must also conclude, that they conferred about the state of all the churches, as he seems, by his epistles to those to whom he could write, to have a thorough knowledge of their state, by the advice he gave unto them; then he opened unto them the dangers to

which they were exposed, and the hour of temptation approaching unto them. And finally, he was not "wanting in returning a recompense to the churches who came to meet him by their governors; and he sent letters of thanks to them, which distilled spiritual grace, with prayers and exhortation."

From Smyrna he wrote epistles to the churches of Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, and Rome. It has been already observed, that his epistles to the Romans was evidently written with a view to dissuade them from attempting to rescue him from the jaws of the lions; but to show how much he was convinced that it was fitting that he should seal the truth, in which he had enjoyed the most solid happiness, by his death, and how ardently he wished for the crown of martyrdom, we will quote his own expostulations to the Romans:

"I hope ere long to salute you, if it be the will of God to grant me to attain unto the end I long for. For the beginning is well disposed, if I shall but have grace without hinderance to receive what is appointed for me. But I fear your love, lest it do me an injury. For it is easy for you to do what you please; but it will be hard for me to attain unto God, if you spare me. I shall never hereafter have such an opportunity of attaining unto God. If you should be silent on my behalf, I shall be made partaker of God: but if you shall love my body, I shall have my course again to run. Wherefore ye cannot do me a greater kindness than to suffer me to be sacrificed to God, now that the altar is already pre-

pared, that when ye are gathered together in love, ye may give thanks to the Father through Jesus Christ; that he has vouchsafed to bring a bishop of Syria unto you, being called from the east to the west. For it is good for me to set from the world, that I may rise again unto Him.

"Ye have never envied any one. Only pray for me, that God would give me both outward and inward strength. Nothing is good that is seen. For even our God Jesus, now that he is in the Father, does so much the more appear. I write to the churches signifying to them all, that I am willing to die for God, unless you hinder me. I beseech that you show not an unseasonable good-will towards me. Suffer me to be food to the beasts, by whom I shall attain unto God. For I am the wheat of God, and shall be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather encourage the beasts, that they may become my sepulchre: then shall I be truly the disciple of Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Pray therefore unto Christ for me, that by these instruments I may be made a sacrifice to God. I do not, as Peter and Paul, command you. They were apostles, I a condemned man. They were free, but I am even to this day a servant. But if I shall suffer, I shall then become the freeman of Jesus Christ, and shall rise free. And now, being in bonds, I learn not to desire any vain thing.

"All the ends of the world, and the kingdoms of it, will profit me nothing: I would rather die for Jesus Christ, than rule to the utmost ends of the

earth. Him I seek, who died for us. Him I desire that rose again for us. This is the gain that is laid up for me.

" Pardon me, my brethren; ye shall not hinder me from living: nor, seeing I desire to go to God, may you separate me from him for the sake of this world, nor seduce me by any of the desires of it. Suffer me to enter into pure light; where, being come, I shall be indeed the servant of God. Permit me to imitate the passion of my God. If any one has Him within himself, let him consider what I desire, and let him have compassion on me, as knowing how I am straitened.

" The prince of this world would fain carry me away, and corrupt my resolution towards my God. Let none of you therefore help him: rather do ye join with me, that is, with God. Though I am alive at the writing of this, yet my desire is to die. My love is crucified; and there is not any fire within me that loves matter, but living and speaking water saying within me, Come to the Father. I take no pleasure in the food of corruption, nor in the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ; and the drink that I long for is his blood, which is incorruptible love, and perpetual life.

" I have no desire to live any longer after the manner of men; neither shall I, if you consent. Be ye therefore willing, that ye yourselves also may be pleasing to God. I exhort you in a few words. I pray you believe me. Jesus Christ will show you that I speak truly. My mouth is without deceit,

nd the Father truly hath spoken by it. Pray therefore for me, that I may accomplish what I desire. If I shall suffer, ye have loved me; but if I shall be rejected, ye have hated me."

It is probable, that the Romans had represented to him the terrors of the death that was prepared for him, with a view to obtain his consent, that they might persuade the people not to desire his being brought forth to be devoured by the beasts, as he writes so strongly upon this subject: "May I enjoy the wild beasts that are prepared for me: which also I wish may exercise all their fierceness upon me; and whom for that end I will encourage, that they may be sure to devour me, and not serve me as they have done some, whom out of fear they have not touched. But if they will not do it willingly, I will provoke them to it. Pardon me in this matter; I know what is profitable for me. Now I begin to be a disciple; nor shall any thing move me, whether visible or invisible, that I may attain to Christ Jesus. Let fire and the cross; let the companies of wild beasts, let breakings of bones, and tearing of members; let the shattering in pieces of the whole body, and all the wicked torments of the devil come upon me, only let me enjoy Jesus Christ."

Having employed the time he was allowed to spend in Smyrna, in the most useful and edifying manner, and, as the relation of his martyrdom tells us, "Having thus strengthened such of his brethren at Rome as were against his martyrdom, by this epistle, as he desired; setting sail from Smyrna (for he was pressed by the soldiers to hasten to the pub-

lic spectacles at Great Rome, that, being delivered to the wild beasts in sight of the Roman people, he might receive the crown for which he strove,) he came to Troas."

We find that the churches of Smyrna and Ephesus, out of their great love and esteem for him, sent one to attend him to Troas, as he writes to the church at Philadelphia, "The love of the brethren, that are at Troas salutes you: from whence also I now write by Burrhus, Polycarp's own deacon, who was sent together with me by those of Ephesus and Smyrna for respect's sake."

He must have made some stay at Troas, as from thence he wrote letters to Polycarp, to the Philadelphians and Smyrnæans.

He was constantly met on the road, as far as the knowledge of his route could reach, by messengers from the neighbouring churches; of this he makes mention to the Romans: "My spirit salutes you, and the love of the churches that have received me, in the name of Jesus Christ, not as a passenger; for even they that were not near to me in the way, have gone before me to the next city to meet me."

Of his journey from Troas to Rome, we have the following account in the relation of his martyrdom:—

"From whence (Troas) going on, being brought to Neapolis, he passed Philippi, through Macedonia, and that part of Epirus which is next to Epidamnus; having found a ship in one of the sea-ports, he sailed over the Adriatic Sea; and from thence entering into the Tyrrhene, and passing by several islands

and cities, at length he saw Puteoli, which being shown to the holy man, he hastened to go forth, being desirous to walk from thence, in the way that Paul the apostle had done: but a violent wind arising, and driving on the ship, would not suffer him to do so: wherefore commending the love of the brethren in that place, he sailed forward. And the wind continuing favourable to us, in one day and a night we indeed were unwillingly hurried on, as sorrowing to think of being separated from this holy martyr; but to him it happened just according to his wish, that he might go sooner out of the world, and attain unto the Lord whom he loved. Wherefore, sailing into the Roman port, and those impure sports being at an end, the soldiers began to be offended at his slowness, but the bishop with great joy complied with their hastiness."

Having brought Ignatius thus far towards the end of his journey, and the attainment of his highest wishes, we cannot but observe that he seems to have been led by the hand of God this long and tedious way, that he might be a monument of the power of grace to the churches through which he passed, and a proof that he did not bear the name of Theophorus in vain, but that Christ was in him the hope of glory, and the principle of action. Thus his occupation on the way, was to show to unbelievers what the redemption in the blood of Christ, when sealed by the Spirit, produces in the human heart, and brings forth in the walk and conversation, even under the severest trials, and to encourage and strengthen the zeal and faith of the churches. That

all desired to have some testimonies of his walk and conversation, is evident, as Polycarp in his epistle to the Philippians writes, "What you know of Ignatius, and those that are with him, signify unto us." And Polycarp, by Ignatius' own desire, and by the desire of the Philippians and other churches, sent to them Ignatius' epistles, "together with what others of his were come to his hands."

The length and various difficulties of his journey must have been very trying to him, when we consider his great age, being upwards of eighty, his being in bonds, and subject to rude, heathenish soldiers, unaccustomed to humanity. As to his bonds, instead of murmuring on their account, he prized them highly as most costly ornaments, or, as he calls them, "Spiritual jewels."

As to the treatment which he received from his keepers, we can have no better account than that which he himself gives of it. He writes to the Romans from Syria, even unto Rome: "I fight with beasts both by sea and land, both night and day; being bound to ten leopards, that is to say, to such a band of soldiers, who, though treated with all manner of kindness, are the worse for it." But he adds, "I am the more instructed by their injuries, yet am I not therefore justified."

The writers of the relation of his martyrdom proceed as follows:—

"Being soon forced away from the Port, so called, we forthwith met the brethren from Rome, (for the report of what concerned the holy martyr was spread abroad,) who were full of fear and joy:

for they rejoiced in that God had vouchsafed them the company of Ignatius, but were afraid when they considered that such a one was brought thither to die. Now some of these he commanded to hold their peace, who were the most zealous for his safety, and said, that they would appease the people, that they should not desire the destruction of the just. He presently knowing this by the Spirit, and saluting all of them, desired that they would show a true love to him, disputing yet more with them than he had done in his epistles, and persuading them not to envy him who was hastening unto the Lord."

This controversy of love and zeal between the aged and fatigued bishop, and the loving and tenderly affected Roman brethren, must have been very moving, and was probably the hardest trial that Ignatius met with on his whole journey. That he overcame what he regarded as a mistaken effect of their love, is a proof of the ardour of heart and burning zeal of the brethren in those days of genuine Christianity, as likewise the readiness to submit, even in the most tender and delicate point, to the desire of this ancient servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. When he had gained his point, we are told "All the brethren kneeling down, he prayed to the Son of God in behalf of the churches, that he would put a stop to the persecution, and continue the love of the brethren towards each other. Which being done, he was with all haste led into the amphitheatre, and speedily, according to the command of Cesar before given, thrown in, the end of

the spectacles being at hand: for it was then a very solemn day, called, in the Roman tongue, the 13th of the Calends of January,* upon which the people were more than ordinarily wont to be gathered together."

Thus was he delivered to the cruel beasts, near the temple, by wicked men; that so the desire of the holy martyr Ignatius might be accomplished as it is written, "The desire of the righteous is acceptable."

It appears that the beasts did their work so effectually, that they left but a few fragments of his body; only the greater and harder part of his bones remained, which were carried to Antioch.

Thus Ignatius obtained his wish, and showed more true heroism, wisdom and fortitude, as it proceeded from unfeigned and ardent love to his gracious Lord and Saviour, and a joyful and assured hope of a blessed immortality in the presence of his God who died for his sins, than Trajan in all his conquests.

In the relation of his martyrdom, it is further said, "that some of the brethren being together watching and praying with tears unto God, to show them what had been done, they had particular displays of the blessedness of Ignatius."

The year in which he suffered martyrdom is not positively ascertained; but this is plain, that it was between the years of our Lord 107 and 116.

The writers of the relation of his martyrdom de-

* 20th of December.—Sura and Synecius were consuls.

clare, that they were eye-witnesses; and conclude it by saying, "We have made known to you both the day and time; that being assembled together, according to the time of his martyrdom, we may communicate with the combatant, and most valiant martyr of Christ, who trod under foot the devil, and perfected the course he had piously desired, in Christ Jesus our Lord; by whom, and with whom all glory and power be to the Father, and the Blessed Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen."

His memory was dear to the churches, and he was pointed out by Polycarp, in his epistle to the Philippians, as an example unto them. He writes, "I exhort all of you that ye obey the word of righteousness, and exercise all patience; which ye have seen set before your eyes, not only in the blessed Ignatius, and Zosimus, and Rufus, but in others among yourselves, and in Paul himself, and the rest of the apostles; for they loved not this present world, but him who died, and was raised again by God for us."

SOME ACCOUNT

OF

POLYCARP.

He was born in the East, and was sold, in his childhood, to a certain noble matron, whose name was Calisto, bred up by her, and at her death made heir to all her estate, which, though very considerable, he soon spent in works of love and mercy.

He received his Christianity from Bucolus, bishop of Smyrna, by whom he was made deacon and catechist of that church; and having discharged those offices with universal approbation, he was, after the decease of Bucolus, made bishop by the apostles, and particularly by St. John, whose disciple he had been with Ignatius.

His character, in his function, was great; and so well known, that his enemies, before his death, cried out, that he should be thrown to the lions, saying, "This is the doctor of Asia, the father of the Christians, and the overthrower of our gods." And when he was burned, they persuaded the governor not to let his friends carry away any of his remains, "Lest," said they, "the Christians forsaking

n that was crucified, should begin to worship Poly-
p." He was greatly esteemed throughout all
ia, and was called the prince and the ruler of Asia,
l his influence extended even to Rome.

Though both Ignatius and Polycarp foresaw that
: latter should also suffer martyrdom, yet he conti-
ed many years after Ignatius' death at the head
his church, till, according to the most probable
ounts, he also obtained the martyr's crown in the
ır of our Lord 147, under the reign of Antonius
ıs, when persecution raged, and many Christians
re thrown to the wild beasts. But when the
ısts would not seize and devour Gemnicus, though
provoked them to it, the multitude cried out,
Take away those wicked wretches; let Polycarp be
ked out." When Polycarp heard that he was
led for, he resolved to stay in the city; but being
secuted, he at length departed to a village not far
, where he stayed some time in prayer. Hearing
ıt his pursuers were near at hand, he withdrew to
other village, where he was found, being betray-
: he might have escaped but would not, saying,
The will of the Lord be done." His conduct had
:h an effect, that some of the soldiers began to re-
nt. The guards, setting him on an ass, brought
n into the city, being Sabbath. Herod, the
ief officer, met him, and taking him into his chariot,
suaded him, saying, "What harm is there in
ring, Lord Cesar, and sacrifice, and so be safe."
ıt he not being to be moved, they threw him vio-
ıtly out of the chariot, and hurt his thigh; how-
er, he went on briskly, as though not hurt, and

was brought to the lists. The proconsul took much pains to persuade him to reproach Christ: But Polycarp answered, "Eighty and six years have I now served Christ, and he has never done me the least wrong: how then can I blaspheme my King and Saviour?" Much more was said and replied. At length he was committed to the flames, and received the crown of his martyrdom on the 26th of March, being Sabbath, in the year 147, and nearly forty years after the death of Ignatius.

CHARACTERS.

ıTIUS, Bishop of Antioch, surnamed THEOPHORUS.

THOPUS, } Deacons.
ıO, }

ıAN, the Roman Emperor.

ʏCARP, Bishop of Smyrna.

SIMUS, }
ʏBIUS, } Messengers of the Churches.
'AS, }

AN CHRISTIANS.

PHILOSOPHERS.

UDIUS, a Soldier.

SOLDIERS.

:E, Deaconess of Antioch.

ECHUMENS.

ITENTS.

THE

MARTYRDOM

OF

ST. IGNATIUS.

ANTIOCH.—*An open place before Ignatius' door.*

PHILO, AGATHOPUS.

PHILO.

THOU knowest, Agathopus, what threats of late
Trajan has breath'd against the Christian name:
Death is their doom, who shall refuse the worship
And rites appointed of the Gentile gods.
Thus he pronounced when warm with Scythian conquests.
Impetuous still from that campaign, he's now
At Antioch. But 'tis casual impulse guides
The mind of man: his new exploit of arms
(For now he looks to Parthia) may take up
His total fervour, nor permit to fall
This nearest thunder hanging o'er our heads.
By this, or some diviner bar, can God

Even yet between his helpless servants stand
And the black day

AGATHOPUS.

——A glorious day, O Philo,
When persecution low'rs! I call it sunshine,
Which quickens the dull bosom of the church
To bold productions, and a bloom of virtues.
Yes, such a worthy juncture I much long for,
When Christian zeal, benumbed and dead thro' ease,
Glows with young life, feels the more copious flow
Of ghostly aids; and, as the dangers rise,
Heightens its pulse, and fills up all its greatness.
Then is the time of crowns; of grants profuse
(Complete remission, open Paradise,
With power to intercede for common souls,)
To generous motives of intenser duty,
Which, while the sufferer sees, serene and glad
He thanks the impious hand that helped him forward.

PHILO.

Even there, methinks, there's something to deject me.
Must I obtain my glory by the guilt
Of other men, of no less lovely make
Original, and offspring of one God!
This thought may damp whom death itself invites:
Besides, I wish not trials, since I know not
Who then shall stand.

AGATHOPUS.

Whoever loves his Lord!
Whoever hath contemplated the cross,

And felt the death of Christ through all its meaning:
Through all its benefits, through all its charms,—
He, reconciled to pain, and far removed
From this world's foreign false felicities,
Carries devoted blood, which, more than ready,
Pants to be spilt upon its Master's grave.
The hypocrite will shrink: but highly welcome
That edge of danger which pares off such members.

PHILO.

I think the love of Christ need not imply
Such blunt importunate desire of death.

AGATHOPUS.

Recall the unworthy thought! and search thy heart,
My Philo; for I fear these sober minds
Have worldly lusts at bottom. Haply fame
And popular favour make thy lot too sweet?

PHILO.

I own 'tis sweet to love, and to be lov'd
By all Christ's people; it may richly comfort
This mortal state; and could it rise so high,
That, from this source, irregular attachment
To life should spring, I'd argue back and say
'Twas not irregular, for here 'twas heaven.
Fame, if it shone, my frailties keep me cool.

AGATHOPUS.

Does not the specious luxury detain thee
Of worldly peace and soft unruffled ease?

PHILO.

No: I still see all my concerns below
Hang by a dubious thread. Am I call'd forth
To action or to suffering, I can meet
From no enervate rest the stronger shakings
Of this rough world.

AGATHOPUS.

Once more; perhaps the cause
Is woman; powerful to bring back to earth
Even towering souls, and kindle up afresh
The light, the taste, the system of old nature.

PHILO.

In vain you seek the cause, my jealous friend,
Why I love life. A thing you little guess
How far I am from loving! Who indeed
Whose soul has any fire, can take delight
In such a blind existence; which ties down
These seraph minds t'attend a dull machine,
To feed and doze, rejoice and fret the same
With animals? which now by sanguine hope,
Ideas gay, illuminates all o'er
The credulous heart; and then with strange surmise
And grief mysterious so envelopes all,
That wisdom doubts, though 'tis indeed one thing,
Or to despise, or use, and balance both.
I have so little footing in this life
Firm to my thoughts, that it could not support me
To live out one day more, did I not look
To reasons in the depths of providence;

For I must own, Agathopus, I think,
These things are not in vain: Our Maker's hand
Hath placed some virtue in this earthly process,
To work us in the end surprising good.

AGATHOPUS.

O Philo, from the cross of Christ alone
Derive thy good! His church is a new world,
Where all thy fate and all thy business lie.
And since thou'rt cold about a speedy passage
Into thy Master's joy, I must at least
Question thy Christian hope. Feel'st thou the pledge
Of blessed resurrection? Does thy heart
Within thee leap to meet the last great scenes?

PHILO.

Though well persuaded that these sins of mine,
Incumbrances so massy to the zeal
Of a whole mortal life, will ne'er resist
When the great Father shall one day shine forth,
Restoring exiled man; yet scarce I dare
Connect myself and glory in one thought:
I do but cast me in the crowd of beings
On God's broad mercy, as a mighty tide
Bearing its peevish offspring safe to harbour.

AGATHOPUS.

I understand thee, Philo, and mayest thou
Now understand how far below the gospel
Thy soul consents to dwell. The friends of Christ
Don't strive with sin, but trample under foot
It's poor exploded antiquated strength.

They don't rely on some benign event
From the wide wheel of things, but pierce directly
Where Jesus now admits them, and ordains
Their thrones in bliss: Hence they in spirit stand,
Free from all spot, amidst the train of heaven,
And see God's face, whose full and constant smile
Doth so attend them through the wilds of life,
That natural dejection, flitting fears
And all vicissitude is swallowed up
In one still dawn of that eternal day——
But see the reverend bishop coming forth.

Enter IGNATIUS.

IGNATIUS.

I hope, my sons, at this important season
No idle talk employed you: Learn betimes
With tender sense to bear the church's burden.
But I must praise the place where you have chose
Your morning stand. From hence we look around
And see so many roofs, where prayer incessant,
With mighty thoughts of heart and fervent faith,
Is offered up to heaven. Hear Thou, my Lord,
Thy people's voice, and give them peace this day!

AGATHOPUS.

Our meditations, father, were the same
With yours, about th' impending persecution.

IGNATIUS.

And don't you think it strange, Agathopus,

nd Philo, ministers and witnesses
f the mere love, and innocent meek life
f Christians, that they should be hated thus?

AGATHOPUS.

he laws of Christ condemn a vicious world.
nd gall it to revenge.

IGNATIUS.

Though that be true,
et still our human foes are chiefly found
oor instruments t'exert a foreign malice,
Vhose depth and horror is beyond the heart
f silly flesh and blood. That ancient rival
f God's dear Son pursues the potentate
1 us his subjects, and retains the nations
Vith all the enchanting sweet and power of evil,
o form his wretched pomp and fight his war.
Vhen heathen hosts attack'd of old the race
f chosen Israel, 'twas in truth a siege
ustain'd by Jesus in his little fort
rom the dark legions. Then the outstretched arm,
ut now, the cross must conquer. Tell me therefore,
s in your ministries you have observed,
low would my flock receive that bitter cup?

PHILO.

irm in the faith.

AGATHOPUS.

Ardent for martyrdom!
yesterday conveyed to a poor man

His dole of public alms: "Give me," said he,
"But one day's bread; I hope to want no more."
Husband, and wife, and other friends take leave
Each time they're call'd from one another's sight,
As not to meet till in the world of spirits.
When at their work, "Fulfil your task," they cry,
"Poor hands; this drudgery will soon be o'er!"
At meals is Scripture read! They seem to need
No earthly food: Is resurrection named!
They loathe it. Children now intelligent
Above their years, mark all their father says,
Look in his face and cry, "Shan't we die too?"
The father in the slumbers of the night
Sees a bright angel wave him to the tortures;
He cries, "I come!" And when he wakes, he finds
His sp'rit half loosened from his mortal prison.
The women now think of no ornaments
But shackles: Every bosom, weak before,
For the grand trial a big soul reserves.
Already to the lot of martyrs raised
All see each other. Ev'ry face more shining
And more august each little threshold seems.

IGNATIUS.

I'm glad my people are so well prepared.
But I've a secret hope, that providence
Means not so much: the blow of persecution
May light indeed, but yet stop short of them.
Trajanus is accounted far from cruel.
Most gentle in the gen'ral and humane:
Perhaps it will content him to chastise
Numbers in one. How joyfully should I

Buy the flock's safety with my single danger!
But come, Agathopus, our holy books
Must be hid somewhere, for they shall not die.

[*Exeunt Ignat. and Agath.*

PHILO.

Reversing thy proposal, O Ignatius,
How many lives in Antioch would redeem
Thy single breath! But heaven's great law, we own,
Pleads on thy side: which loves to snatch away
The tallest saint, and force his raw dependents,
Forsaken branches, to strike root themselves.

[*Noise without.*

I know that noise; it is the Emperor's chariot:
He fails not daily on a plain hard by
To exercise his soldiers. He went out
This morning with the dawn. O let him teach
Us to be wise, and wage a better warfare,
With vigilance as earnest and unweary'd!—
But how is this? Here's part of his retinue
Bending this way. I'll stand aside and watch them.

Enter SOLDIERS.

FIRST SOLDIER.

What should these Christians be? Methinks for once
I'd see what passes in their meeting.

SECOND SOLDIER.

Fool!
Their meeting's in the dark, where they commit
Adultery, and quaff the blood of infants.

FIRST SOLDIER.

I cannot think so: they are simple people,
Given to fancies, but of no ill meaning.

SECOND SOLDIER.

Why then should our wise Emperor be so bent
Against them? As he drove through yonder gate,
He cast his eye this way. "O here," says he,
"In these black lanes and forlorn skirts of Antioch,
The new sect chiefly dwell. In vain do we
Give laws to nations, if the dregs of men
May thus outbrave us. Though to-day we march
Onwards to Parthia, I must crush this evil
Before I stir.—Some of you instantly
The Christian bishop seek, and bring him to us."

THIRD SOLDIER.

But now 'tis time to ask which is his door:
And see, here's one can tell us: Friend, where lives
Ignatius?

PHILO.

There, the house is just before you.

[*Exeunt Soldiers.*

Good shepherd! Soon his wish was heard. O Lord,
Grant him thy strength, and guide what now ensues.

[*Exit.*

A Room of State.—Trajan seated and attended—Ignatius brought in by the Soldiers.

TRAJAN, IGNATIUS.

TRAJAN.

WHAT art thou, wretch! pushed on by thy ill genius,
Not only to oppose my will, nor own
The gods of Rome, but other simple souls
Inveigle to their ruin?

IGNATIUS.

Noble Emperor,
I bear (and not in vain, through grace divine)
A name of better import than to be
Or wretched or demoniac. No, the man
Who is Theophorus can ne'er want joy;
Is raised above the reach of misery,
Is freed from demon's power—nor only freed,
But able to control and scourge the foe.
As I with ease their every snare dissolve,
Sustained by Christ the heavenly King.

TRAJAN.

Explain,
What mean'st thou by the name Theophorus?

IGNATIUS.

'Tis he, whose soul is ever full of God,
'Tis he, who carries Christ within his breast.

TRAJAN.

And think'st thou that in us no gods reside,
Enjoying as we do their aid in battle?

IGNATIUS.

Whom you call gods, and misinformed adore,
Are demons of the nations. One alone
True God there is, who made the earth and sky,
And all things in them: and one Jesus Christ,
Son of his love, whose kingdom be my portion!

TRAJAN.

Thou mean'st the same whom Pilate crucified?

IGNATIUS.

Him I do mean who crucified my sin,
Together with its author; and subdued
The realm of darkness, (gladly I repeat
What I on this occasion prove and feel)
Under their feet who carry him in heart.

TRAJAN.

So then the Crucified lives yet in thee?

IGNATIUS.

He does; for thus the gracious promise runs,
" In them I'll walk, and in their hearts I'll dwell."

TRAJAN.

Thus, therefore, I conclude; since this fond man
Affirms, with frantic phrase, that still in him

The Criminal lives, whom to the cross we doomed,
Let him be carried to Imperial Rome,
And, worried by wild beasts, divert the people.
Ten of our soldiers guard him; and just now
Put on his chains. We'll haste to higher cares.
From quelled opinions pass to conquer lands.

They put on Ignatius' chains.

[*Exit Trajan.*

IGNATIUS.

Pursue thy glory, Trajan; I of mine
Am now possessed: thanks to my gracious Lord,
That for his love and faith in his firm word,
I'm bound in irons with the great St. Paul,
Am called to sufferings, and can bless the call!

The Christians' place of religious assemblies. The People coming in at the lower end of the place.

AGATHOPUS, PHILO.

AGATHOPUS.

How happy is our office, thus to stand
And serve the brotherhood; despatch th' affairs,
And by a nearer view admire the graces,
Peculiar sentiments, and varied virtue
Of thousand lovely souls all taught of God!
Nay, even so often to tell over names

And faces marked for glory, gives a pleasure,
Like that wherewith the prophet's angel once
Shall pass along, sealing the sons of light.

PHILO.

I sadly mourn those few whose lapse and frailty
Hath razed them from our list: but real seems
Their penitence, though scarce fulfilled its period:
Shall we propose them to the bishop's mercy?

AGATHOPUS.

Yes, at this time, for persecution's hour
The canon supersedes. Now guilty souls,
Released from other discipline, have leave
To purge their sins in blood; and blushing bear
The rank of faithful with them to the dead.
Now also the young hearts of catechumens
Should be admitted to the Christian voyage;
Whose course, soon finish'd, may, perhaps, ne'er know
That gradual conflux of temptation's waves
Which meets and shakes our common perseverance.
But where is Dirce? We must speak with her.

PHILO.

Yonder she is.

AGATHOPUS.

Then beckon to her Philo.

[*Philo beckons, and Dirce comes up to them.*]

My sister, this is the last time you'll see
Our gentle bishop; therefore now consider

If there be any soul under your hand
That he may be of use to?

DIRCE.

The good bishop
Is useful like the day, a general guide
And comfort to us in our several paths;
But otherwise, there's none within my charge
Wants any more particular ray of light.

AGATHOPUS.

None prone to sadness, or perplexed with doubts?

DIRCE.

That case I own is frequent in our sex,
From tenderness of frame, and more sincere
And close attention to religious cares.
But all at present walk in such strong works,
And fervent darings of exerted zeal,
That there's no room for scruples or for clouds
To gather on the soul. Each softest mind
Stands now above its usual lets and fears
As in another region; and, collected
Into itself, secure of Christ within,
Darts with a bolder motion through this life,
Nor needs the friend, and breaks through every foe.

PHILO.

This is a pastor's joy, when his whole flock
So full of Christ, use him for order's sake
As if they used him not. But what's become
Of the designed espousals of Maria,

For learning famed, and by Ignatius deemed
Pattern of female virtues, with the brother
Approv'd of by her?

DIRCE.

At this awful time,
When both so soon above mortality
May be with Christ, they drop, with joint consent,
Such thoughts, though holy, nor unworthy those
Who love the Lord no less, but at more distance
Wait to put on the privilege of angels.
Maria now breathes her devoted heart
In prayer; is far superior to poor hopes
From ought beneath the skies. Yet as she saw
Worth in that brother, and the grace of Christ
Brightening his soul, she does not still disdain
The thought of meeting him among blest myriads
With some peculiar and immortal friendship.

AGATHOPUS.

My Dirce, thou hast been for several years
A faithful leader of the lambs of Christ;
And many souls, by thy maternal voice,
In the hard conflict and the wavering hour,
Have took the courage to cast off this world:
Thou mayest expect, if any female blood
Is shed, it will be thine.

DIRCE.

Welcome the day!
I think I have some blood about my heart,
Though cold and withered in this outward frame,
That would not shun to be poured out for Jesus.

PHILO.

hold the people in great numbers present.

AGATHOPUS.

speak to them.—My brethren and my sisters,
your respective places. You shall hear
ce more the good Ignatius. With much pain
has the guard's consent—O! here he is.

ter IGNATIUS, *guarded by the* SOLDIERS.

IGNATIUS.

ank you for your gentleness, my keepers!
speech is first to you, and if there's here
y beside, a stranger to our faith.
re 'tis we meet; and you shall hear our doctrine,
hich, as you truly say, is mostly taught
corners. But this secrecy, not guilt,
t meekness that would not offend, persuades.
r holy purpose and our pure assembly
rs not the light, but asks a fuller light
an this weak world can see by. That great day
hich is revealed in fire, and in the blaze
highest truth and reason, shall approve
hat we poor worms have acted in this place,
d angels, who are fixed attendants here,
hen they report in language of their world,
e hymn, the prayer, the fellowship of saints,
ounds nor crime nor folly. True it is,
e differ somewhat in our form of life

From other men: and singularity,
If needless and fantastic, has no comfort
When public hatred frowns. Nor would that scheme
Deserve the stress of suffering zeal, whose worth
Lay in fine notions; but could not relieve
With real strength the labouring heart, nor alter,
By operation deep, our wretched being.
But if, by seal of God and true experience
Of some few happy souls, a doctrine stands
Commended, as the medicine of our nature,
Which every seed of woe subdues within:
Then, sure, amidst the anger of sick minds,
Amidst all dangers of the friendly teacher,
It must be taught. And such is our religion,
Great in itself by solid gifts of grace;
It's lovely secret healthful to mankind.
This we hold forth, couched under decent rites,
Which, while you look upon as singular,
Are used with social heart. For thus we think
You now idolaters do darkly mean
The God we serve, and will, with vast relentings,
Discover him at last.——

SOLDIERS.

Old man forbear!
You've liberty to speak, but not disparage
The Emperor's religion.

IGNATIUS.

Now to you,
Beloved in Christ, I turn. I have asserted
What you'll attest, that as by proper laws

And many special customs, we are severed
A chosen body from the world about us:
So the distinction well is justified
By inward graces and peculiar bliss
Within this body felt. Are there not here
Men who can say, in soberness and truth,
That guilt is done away, and innocence
Fearless and free restored within their breasts?
That vice with dark inextricable bands
No more detains, nor drives to acts of shame
The blushing, reasoning, reluctant mind;
That for the passions which by turns inspire
The worthless life of nature, anger, sloth,
And avarice, and pride, pure love prevails,
Kindled by heaven, nor by a bad world quenched?
That they have inwardly exchanged their climate,
And passed from death to life; so that their heart,
Healed and exulting from its deep recess,
Returns this answer: That the power of evil,
The sting of pain, and terrors of the grave,
Are now no more; or but at distance rage
n faithless minds; while not a dart can reach
Their citadel of peace in Jesus' love?
That they, in short, to God's paternal face
And firm affection can appeal and look,
Nor earthly griefs dare intercept the prospect;
But still to every want they feel as men,
To every priestly charitable prayer
They breathe as saints of God; his ear and power
Are nigh: till thus, by constant use and proof
Of aid celestial, heaven is more than earth

Their home, the country of their heart and com
merce?
If thus it is, and has been felt amongst us,
What can I say but this, Value and keep
Your happiness in Christ! Weak are my words
To teach whom he enlightens. Glad I am,
However, that his love has fired my tongue
To bear such witness to his grace and blood,
As moved you oft to make a deeper search
Into that mystery: till a glance from Him,
Fraught with the thing itself, left you and me
Happy and dumb before our bounteous Lord
As I now am. O Jesus, thou art all!

AGATHOPUS.

Father, the penitents with tears beseech you
To think of them before you go.

IGNATIUS.

Poor Men!
Let them draw near; declare the truth, my Sons.
To leave the loving Saviour, is it not
A bitter thing? Is it not worse than death?
Have you enjoyed one easy hour by all
That human wealth or wisdom could do for you,
While wretchedly by sin cut off from Him
And from his people's fellowship?

PENITENTS.

O no!
Through deserts we have walked, and found no res

IGNATIUS.

nay you find it now! May our good Lord
forth again with healing aspect on you!
you were before with him and us!
emember, that the life of faith
in joy and lustre by each fall,
igh the substance be retrieved.

PENITENTS.

Dear Saviour,
e us to the meanest of thy mansions!

PHILO.

atechumens too your pleasure wait.

IGNATIUS.

hither ye, whom from an evil world
ame of Jesus draws! you count him sweet,
reat, and mighty, by that glimmering light
novice minds have gained. You venerate
full acquaintance, and that vital union
eby the faithful know him: And to this
ow aspire. But can you then let go
manly wisdom, and become as babes
irn new maxims, and the mind of Christ?
ou forsake your former ease and sunshine
ociate with a poor afflicted people,
corn of all mankind? Can you the weight
ur whole souls, with all your hopes of God,
on a long past action; and that such
ur Lord's mystic but opprobrious death;

Or on events which visionary seem,
A resurrection, and some second world?
Can you such gratitude and sov'reign love
Contract for One, who but with grace unseen
Assists you inwardly; that for His sake
You'll crucify your flesh, curb your own will,
And nothing but his servants be in life?
Dare you henceforward undertake these things?

CATECHUMENS.

We have considered them, and by God's help
We dare.

IGNATIUS.

Then you shall soon, by sacred rites,
Among us be admitted: and meanwhile,
If dear and blessed you account this day,
Sing your first praises to your Master's honour.

CATECHUMENS SING:

O thou, who dost lead each ignorant lamb
Of thy royal flock in Wisdom's bright ways,
Enable thy children, close knit in thy name,
Thee, Christ, friend of weak ones, with pure hearts to prais

Thou art the great Word, and wisdom of God,
The Saviour of souls; o'ercome by thy charms
Even hearts cold and hopeless, deep sunk in sin's flood,
A taste of thy sweetness soon raises and warms.

Be therefore our prince, our glory and guide;
Thy steps are the path to virtue and bliss!
Who drink of thy Spirit, and in thee confide,
Their works are all comely, there's nothing amiss.

Grant us in thy word and grace so to grow,
That more solid praise to thee we may sing;
In life and in doctrine incessantly show
Our whole heart is justly given up to our King.

To God's holy Child, so strong to redeem,
By us, who through grace, his likeness do bear,
Be glory for ever, while rooted in Him,
A people of prudence and peace we appear!

AGATHOPUS.

Now stand among the brethren, and partake
What further shall be said.

[*Cat. and Pen. stand among the Brethren.*

IGNATIUS.

If any church
s more obliged than others to maintain
The purity of faith, the flame of love,
And search the perfect meaning of the gospel,
Tis ours, where first began the name of Christians.
That name is much adorned by due demeanour
To those without; with meekness of strong minds,
Bearing whate'er in blindness they shall do
To grieve us; nor rejecting government,
Or ought that's wise or good in this world's course;
But above all, that blessed knot be kept
Of peace and love within ourselves. 'Tis this
Detains our Lord among us; who departs
Soon, like the soul, from torn dissevered limbs.
While this continues, Satan shall not find
Room to infuse his mischief; nor shall I
Be wanted; you will all support and build

Each other up. Be jealous then that nought,
Plenty, nor fame, nor gifts of grace, be sweet
To any, but in common with his brethren.
Christ in each other see and serve: nor let
Suspicions or resentments rise betwixt you.
But one word more: Sacred, you know, with us,
Domestic order is and decency;
Let those who should obey and learn, submit
Most gladly so to do, their easier lot;
Those who should teach and govern, as for Christ,
Dispassionate and prudent, fill their place.
Go thus through life, where poverty and toil
In meanest occupation you must suffer,
(And well you may with Christ within) if not
The fiery trial. But our Lord will see,
While you cleave to him, how to lead you on.
In his great name I leave my blessing with you!
Philo, Agathopus, you'll go with me.

AGATHOPUS.

We humbly thank you, father.

PHILO.

But you, brethren
Bear on your heart your pastor's love, and strive,
If in life's easy common road you live,
Yet still proportionably strong to feel
The truths for which he goes his blood to spill!

[*Exeunt*

Grant us in thy word and grace so to grow,
That more solid praise to thee we may sing;
In life and in doctrine incessantly show
Our whole heart is justly given up to our King.

To God's holy Child, so strong to redeem,
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Detains our Lord among us; who departs
Soon, like the soul, from torn dissevered limbs.
While this continues, Satan shall not find
Room to infuse his mischief; nor shall I
Be wanted; you will all support and build

Then you rip up our faults; yet can't retain
The air of masters long: for when we show
Our just resentment, you, like silly slaves,
Tamely digest both mockery and blows.

IGNATIUS.

May you in time know from what fund of soul
All this proceeds; what energy within
Makes us——

SOLDIER.

Old man, we are not thy disciples,
But keepers; save thy voice for them that seek it.

IGNATIUS.

Then my request will suit your inclinations.
Shall I have leave, while we abide at Smyrna,
T' associate with a brother in this place?

SOLDIER.

Yes, in our eye. But we shall cut you short
Amidst your chat and solemn pageantry
Of sighs, and prayers, and songs, and sentences,
So tedious when you meet. For soon at Rome
The sports come on, and we must bring the bishop
Where a thronged audience will as usual wait
His looks and gesture; likely now to yield
Humane for once, some pleasure to mankind.
Go to your friend and place us in some corner.

An inner Chamber.—Polycarp sitting at one end—Ignatius goes up to him—Soldiers retire to the other end of the room.

IGNATIUS, POLYCARP.

IGNATIUS.

How is my friend? Feels he the mortal part
Oppress the fervent soul?

POLYCARP.

Not much, my brother,
Tis but a slight disorder, and my Saviour
Is doubly careful to support within
My weary heart with pledges of his love.

IGNATIUS.

I little thought, dear Polycarp, again
To see thy face.

POLYCARP.

Full many rounds indeed
Have time, and human things, and human thoughts
Gone through, since we before sat thus together.

IGNATIUS.

We then were younger, but not otherwise
Much different: for the whirlpool of blind passion
Was, from the first, no element of ours.

POLYCARP.

Just as we launched into a dangerous world
God sent us a good pilot.

IGNATIUS.

So he did.
I often think, and shall to my last breath,
Of the last hours we spent with that great man.

POLYCARP.

Is it partiality, or is it insight
Into the system of a dear friend's conduct,
That makes each little thing, he says or does,
Speak more to us, than others are aware of?
But so it is. I see the holiness
Of John, not only in his elevations
That struck mankind, but even where he seemed
T' express the human and the frailer side.
Thus in his playing, to unbend the mind
With a tame partridge, there's a tacit slur
On mortal care, as if he said, " Be easy,
Your projects and this play meet in a point."
So when old man, for lack of memory
And matter, as it seemed, he oft repeated
One lesson, " Love the brethren." 'Twas, we know,
A thought extracted from a world of thinking.

IGNATIUS.

Yes, charity was always his chief theme.

POLYCARP.

And that from reasonings not at all supine,

r they were, I'm apt to think, the man
ıld surround the sum of things, andspy
rt of God and secrets of his empire,
ıpeak but love: with him the bright result
:hange the hue of intermediate scenes,
ɛe one thing of all theology.
ın, 'tis certain had an eagle's eye:
whence all creation first began,
ıow lies, and where it ends at last:
the mighty Logos moving through it
ın of beings first within himself)
' educe the powers and varied beauties
eep Godhead, image of his Father.
n, to raise in purity and joy,
ral world, more lax variety,
ıe second image; which, as child
er feature, should be covered o'er
s kind radiance and grow up in Him.

IGNATIUS.

should assign a nearer source,
the bounds of time and of the church,
ıis strains of love: The Word made flesh,
is hearing gave our holy union
our to stand next in saving souls
ɔwn blood. Nay more, had condescended
imself a brother; make but one
a not of friends: for so he seemed
stle said,* to Peter and the rest,
, free, and but more knowing friend.

* John, whose disciple Ignatius was.

POLYCARP.

But John was the great favourite: he was seated
Still next to Jesus.

IGNATIUS.

Yes, and might not that
The near admission to such worth and sweetness
Give him a bent to love? As 'tis well known,
A man fresh come from one deserving object
Can love a species in the shadow of it.

POLYCARP.

That blessed converse seemed indeed the softest,
As well as strongest image of his mind.
At Jesus' name, with recollected awe,
We'd stand adoring: he would drop a tear,
As for an old acquaintance; then correct it
With a mild smile, that let down his whole soul
To simplest posture and a strange repose.
Wonder not, sons, said he, that still my heart
Emotions feel for Jesus as a man.
I know him such, most amiable and kind!
And every little passage of his life
In flesh, his walks, his lodging and repast,
Not without shifts of poverty, recur.
How many silly questions have we asked him,
While he gave answers, that with all their depth
Would also please? Cheerful he was to us;
But let me tell you, sons, he was within
A pensive man, and always had a load
Upon his spirits.

IGNATIUS.

That was for our sins.
ing was His, that constant joy of faith
be the character of our poor service,
guilt he bore, and drank up all our curse.

POLYCARP.

ous door of hope! how much did John
when the Gnostic heresy would shut it,
g Christ had flesh wherein to suffer.

IGNATIUS.

is one reason why the holy charge
blest virgin, who abode with him,
him so much; she was a monument
s' true humanity.

POLYCARP.

As that
ise the great basis of our hope
rrection and a glorious change
is, from mortal to immortal flesh.

IGNATIUS.

hat immortal flesh may be, was shown
n in awful vision, when he saw
arce could bear the overwhelming favour)
as stand before him, now expressing
venly substance and his robes of light.

POLYCARP.

urge discoveries to the end of time

Were then vouchsafed to John! he saw the rage
Of Antichrist prevailing, and the love
Of many waxing cold. He saw the throne
Where sits our Lamb, incessantly adored
By angel-hosts, and looking down mean-while
On mortal man, and on his suffering church.
He saw the mighty judgment and the plagues
Of God's last wrath: from which the chosen bands
Into their New Jerusalem received,
Partake with Jesus a triumphant rest.

IGNATIUS.

Low at the feet, not only of great John,
But of the meanest servant of my Lord,
May I be found that day! Yet must I tell
(Since Polycarp's no novice in these things)
What gifts of late, as I draw nearer death,
Are lent even me. I can discern the scope
Of former dispensations; both the league
And difference of Christianity and them.
I know the ranks and polity of angels,
And by this mouth, predictive of events
Then future, hath the Father truly spoke.

POLYCARP.

I do believe it brother, (and my soul
By sympathy has tasted of thy gifts
While thou dost speak) for doth not Christ indeed
Dwell in all his, and show forth as he pleases,
Or graces which the world calls wonderful,
Or those which with mere nature it confounds?

IGNATIUS.

ı another doctrine sweetly taught
apostle; that we live in Christ,
ellowship with him, and on him grow
ıches on the vine; that he's a light,
ıd cheering to our inward man.
ıort description does convey much more
he most laboured circle of vain words.

POLYCARP.

ıtion which we hold in Jesus now,
ıed from earth, no words of man can reach;
u shall quickly know, my dear Ignatius,
tis to be with him in better regions,
ıee his face, and see it as a martyr.

IGNATIUS.

omfort Polycarp! your time will come.
ıcons should be back. I gave them leave
ır or two to see the saints of Smyrna.

POLYCARP.

learn ought, when they have lived at Antioch.

IGNATIUS.

ı appeal is made (as I perceived
to your chief brethren's light and spirit,
the Christian life. My two young men
ferent in their natures; and the warmest
to transform the other to himself.
is indeed were well, could it be done:

For I must own Agathopus is faithful
And fervent in the work of Christ; the more
Because he's purely what the gospel makes him,
Knowing no taste or theory besides.
But then the other likewise is sincere;
Too much indeed entangled with the charms
Of philosophic liberty of thought,
Milky benevolence, and love of ease;
Yet firm at heart to Christ; howe'er complexion,
Like a strong wind, may half a different way,
Blow back the soul's loose vest.

POLYCARP.

Is there no use
Whereto this latter genius may be turned?

IGNATIUS.

To teach the wounded self-abhorring mind
A secret hope and patience with itself,
Is Philo's talent. As his sense is quick
To equity, and caution, and decorum;
And as he truly loves the human nature,
He's farther useful to restrain excesses;
And chiefly that, were most young converts err,
A pique and enmity to unbelievers.
But here they come.

Enter PHILO *and* AGATHOPUS.

PHILO.

Your happy, reverend father,
In such a worthy flock.

AGATHOPUS.

But thou'rt condemned.

POLYCARP.

ve heard the case: shall I be arbitrator?
idge not each other any more my sons!
ach has his province: Thou, Agathopus,
f make impetuous, and by grace divine,
pright in faith, and full of Christian fervour,
rt destined to convert: thou shalt display
nd strike the drowsy world with the strong blaze
f Christ's religion and its true demands;
Which are no lower than thou hast conceived them.
hilo shall follow thee, by nature formed
o be a comforter; and gleam up these
As his heart shows him 'tis the mind of God)
ot yet so firmly bound up in thy bundles,
or marked illustriously th' Elect of Christ.

IGNATIUS.

thank you Polycarp.

[*Polycarp looks towards the end of the room.*]

What see you there?

POLYCARP.

ne of the soldiers looks extremely thoughtful,
softness creeping o'er his hardy face;
ow all the longing that an eye can carry
le darts at you: then checks himself, and droops
ixed on the earth. One step he just has taken,
ut fears to add a second——Shall we call him?

IGNATIUS.

Yes, by all means.—Friend, would you speak w
me?

[*A Soldier advances from the rest up to Ignat and Polycarp.*

SOLDIER.

I am not worthy, holy man, to come
Into your presence.

IGNATIUS.

Why? what is the matter?

SOLDIER.

Don't you remember that a soldier struck you?

IGNATIUS.

I have forgot it.

SOLDIER.

And derided you
This very morning? I was the vile wretch
That did it: but this heart is humbled since.

IGNATIUS.

And what can I do for you?

SOLDIER.

Pardon me.

IGNATIUS.

That's done: What more?

SOLDIER.

I can't tell what! my soul
you strangely. 'Tis as if it melted
our mould. I would be what you are!

IGNATIUS.

ke thee so, my son!

SOLDIER.

Why! can it be?
ıe word because methought 'twas sweet:
man, got into some brave dream,
nself to it, and keeps shut his eyes;
I open them, alas! for me
no hope: I ne'er shall be like you!
a wicked liver all my time. [*Weeps.*

IGNATIUS.

ł not hinder.

SOLDIER.

What not all those vices?
them, but I know they're things so strange
hat, though 't would ease me much, I can-

e tale to stain your whitest thoughts.

IGNATIUS.

, whate'er beneath temptation's hour,
lering path and broadest foolishness

Hath been, 'twas from a nature not unknown,
And not unfelt by us.

SOLDIER.

Are not you holy?

IGNATIUS.

We are, thanks be to Christ.

SOLDIER.

So then, I learn
There lies the med'cine that can help even me!
What does your Christ insist that one should do
To gain his favour? I would lance this flesh
With many a wound, or lie whole nights in frost,
Or——

IGNATIUS.

O my child, he came not to impose
Sufferings on you, but in your stead to suffer.
He died some years ago in Palestine,
Professedly and purely for your sins.

SOLDIER.

No, not for mine: for I was far away,
And ne'er acquainted with him.

IGNATIUS.

But my child,
He made you, and so knew your name and nature:
And then, though God, He, with a parent's pity,
Became a man to cleanse you with his blood.

SOLDIER.

He helps me, therefore, as at first he made me?

IGNATIUS.

'Tis true, my child, and you were then but dust,
And could do nothing.

SOLDIER.

I will sink again
To dust: lie on this ground till he shall come
And take me up.

[*Falls prostrate.*

IGNATIUS.

O son of God most high!
Look down, this is thy day: Be glorified
By healing this thy creature: Grant him peace,
And perfect what thou hast begun.

[*Soldier rising up.*

SOLDIER.

Good father,
How do you find yourself when God is with you?
I feel a gentle flame within my breast
That seems to alter every nerve about me.
I'm lightsome now; and my whole soul's directed
Up to those heavens, as if I had some friend
Residing there that never would forsake me.

IGNATIUS.

And so thou hast my son; Christ now is thine,

For ever thine, and all thy sins forgiven!
Be a new man henceforth, and one of us.

ALL.

All glory be to God and to the Lamb!

POLYCARP.

Yea, praise to Him accessible and mild,
Who keeps no state with a returning child:
But free ordaining him an heir to day
Of all his wealth, accelerates the display.
Like the great ocean, when some dam gives way.
Let never narrow hearts the haste arraign
Of Jesus to relieve a sinner's pain:
He knows what is in man, nor to his art
Are chaos and creation far apart.
There's but a word between! Be that word given,
The sinful soul shall be a saint of heaven:
And with his Maker pitch his tent more sweet,
More firm, with these dark clouds beneath his feet.

The outer Chamber of Polycarp's House.

AGATHOPUS, PHILO.

AGATHOPUS.

THE hour approaches, when the messengers
Of Asia's churches, who have been already
Once with Ignatius, promised to return.

PHILO.

They'll be here soon: we'll tarry to receive them.

AGATHOPUS.

never saw a sight more venerable,
)r that gave higher thoughts of something real
n Christian faith and love, than when choice men,
'rom different congregations of this province,
fet all at Smyrna but to see our martyr.

PHILO.

ome of them please me much.

AGATHOPUS.

Yes, there's Onesimus,
ishop of Ephesus, all over love
nd tenderness to souls.

PHILO.

None strikes me more
han the Magnesian chief, Damas, I think,
bishop in his youth. There's a fine soul
/ithin that man.

AGATHOPUS.

Not to forget the grave
)lybius of Tralles, wise and plain.

PHILO.

ır different likings are not now so fierce.

AGATHOPUS.

No, Philo, we are one! I lay me under
Thy spirit, like the ground thou tread'st upon
And would give up whate'er I have to purchase
One feature of the soul I so misjudged.

PHILO.

Honest Agathopus, still thou art fervent!
There is no cause for that. Thou hast thy path,
And that as much more excellent than mine
As the bright sun excels the sickly moon.
For all the strong in faith, who snatch the prime
Of gospel grace, and it's meridian fires,
Are thine; while I th' inglorious crowd befriend,
Who creep benighted in the rear of hope.

AGATHOPUS.

Ay, Philo, you were always mild to sinners.
I hardly ever saw one reconciled,
But my heart blamed the condescending terms.
But 'twas not so last night. Were I in glory,
I could have plucked the crown from my own head
To put it on the soldier's.

PHILO.

Thou wast never
Stained with foul crimes, Agathopus, but I
Have been a deep offender, and can yearn
Over a loathsome lazar like myself.
I never told thee how I was converted:
Cilicia was my native land. My father,
Too fond and easy, put it in my power

ıer every taste: he found his error:
:ee reproving me, he let me see
for grief. This was reproof indeed
/ho dearly loved him; and ne'er felt
must say) even in the life of sin,
assions. Much I thought of leaving life,
the place where I had killed a parent.
me wandering, I, in anguish still,
d to Tarsus. The good bishop there
ı the cleansing virtue of Christ's blood;
o hear him; for I was so dead
ıis world, I now ne'er shunn'd reproach.
:st my soul conceived a glimmering hope;
greater Father had been grieved,
l for me! so great he could remit
ıplication of impieties.
ıptized, chose deacon, came to Antioch
ness, where Ignatius asked to keep me.

AGATHOPUS.

er thou wast, O Philo, heretofore,
ee now a saint, and born of God:
ıce mine eyes are open, I discover
ily acts and spirit of thy life
ll the principles, though not the pomp
ı perfection and a light divine;
ike an expert swordsman, thou dost more
/, and smooth, and unsuspected motions,
perhaps with all my brandishes.

PHILO.

not so, my friend! 'Tis men like you,

That must support Christianity. The reasons
Of that admitted once, require thenceforth
A constant ardour, an exerted soul
Still on the wing with some ecstatic warmth,
If e'er this fails, men of my turn, who now
Make no unpleasing discord to the gospel,
(For 'tis a discord) lost in stronger numbers
Of you, who still bear up the genuine sound:
If e'er I say, your brave and worthy voices
Shall under ours subside, we shall invent
Some foreign harmony, and cast off Christ's.
But I would hear what work of God has past
Upon thy soul, Agathopus.

AGATHOPUS.

I was
At Antioch born, and bred by Christian rules;
And ne'er defiled with so much outward sin,
As with due emphasis might show the need
I had of Jesus, and endear his blood.
Yet, by one comprehensive glance, did God
Teach me the truth of things. I had one morning
Kneeled down to prayer, my most delightful task:
When all at once a crowd of horrid thoughts,
Fraught with the images and rankest venom
Of all the vices that ever man committed,
Broke in upon my soul. I was amazed
To see myself from every shape of good,
Where I had built my rest, immensely back,
As on some desert island thrown, where seemed
No hopes of succour. But the Saviour came,
And with his splendour brightened all the place.

ıed I was from real sin; and felt
ıose quick terrors, and that great deliverance
fort as intense, which lie beneath
el we so indolent enjoy.

PHILO.

ıust you be, and always nigh to Christ,
you preserved this light.

AGATHOPUS.

All souls must do so.
eshest memory still must hold before us
onder and true joy of that first hour,
fear and sin, to hope and innocence,
ar, by firm, though sudden steps were changed,
ll we ever praise the power of Christ,
ı grants this leave and mystic privilege
, so rotten in ourselves, to stand
ıow from every spot of human follies——
's some one coming in.

PHILO.

'Tis only Claudius.
soul! he hangs upon us, and can scarce
to be stationed with his brutish fellows.

Enter CLAUDIUS *the Soldier.*

CLAUDIUS.

learest brethren! how shall I express
t our good Lord does for me! night and day

I find him with me, and He shows me still
Fresh wonders! What a thing is Jesus' love!
Soft is my heart as infant's flesh; yet able
Like adamant or steel, to stand the shock
Of death and hell, and cut its way through all.
There's something in me, moment after moment,
Spreading and rising like a tree of life:
I follow it, and scarce feel the ground I tread on.
I'm wholly Christ's! But how can I be his,
O tell me, in a soldier's rough profession?
Must I kill men?

PHILO.

You mean, must you not love them?
Yet you're a member of this world, whose process
Involves even us in many things.——But see,
The deputies are coming.

CLAUDIUS.

I'll retire.

[*Exit Claudius.*

Enter ONESIMUS, POLYBIUS, DAMAS, *with other Messengers of the Churches.*

ONESIMUS.

Again we come to wait on good Ignatius.
Is he at leisure?

PHILO.

I'll go in and see.

[*Exit Philo.*

AGATHOPUS.

is talked of in your several countries.

ONESIMUS.

dmire so bright a character.

AGATHOPUS.

like us, you ever at his side
ı his life and conduct?

DAMAS.

You were happy.
ɔ from far, and don't repent the labour,
to taste the graces of his spirit.

AGATHOPUS.

ı man so pure in private life,
voted to the things above,
a servant both of Christ and men;
y he acted without spark of nature,
; each motion flowed with ease and beauty.
h a pastor was he, so intent
l from errors and build up in Christ
m, innocence, and unity)
ple soul; so gentle too therein,
but blest itself it had a father.
ıld he moan when any persecution
ed the flock! and (which in him was great)
t its removal; though thereby
l himself from all his wish on earth.
, when fell Domitian's rage gave o'er,

" Now I shall never be a true disciple,
And die for Christ !"

POLYBIUS.

Glad would I hear more of him,
Pattern of bishops ! But lo, Philo comes.

Re-enter PHILO.

PHILO.

Ignatius, honoured Elders, now attends you.

The Inner Chamber.

IGNATIUS *and* POLYCARP—*Enter to them* ONESIMUS, POLYBIUS, DAMAS, *&c.* —PHILO *and* AGATHOPUS.

ONESIMUS.

We told you in the morning, blessed man,
What sorrow and what warmth your holy bonds
Spread through the churches. They could do no less
Than send us to salute you ; and to knit,
By all th' advantage of this dread occasion,
Our common love ; and enter as we can
Into the hope and might of Jesus with you.

IGNATIUS.

To love me they did well : for much I want

The kind assistance of each Christian soul.
I hope all give it me. Pray for me, brethren!

POLYBIUS.

We do.

DAMAS.

May nothing, when the time shall come,
Blemish thy combat!

IGNATIUS.

Ay, that prayer was right.
For I have weakness still, and ghostly foes
Which fight against me and my resolution.
Heaven knows, I am a sinner! and deserve
To die more deaths than one on that account.
What favour then, O Lord, that wretched flesh
Shall honour thee, while sinking to its dust!

ONESIMUS.

We wait upon you now, to know your will
And orders to the churches: since to-morrow
You sail to Rome; and we, alas! return,
Not worthy yet of chains, to our own flocks.

IGNATIUS.

See, I have writ some hasty letters for you
To carry back. And give my humble thanks
To every congregation.

[*Servant appears at the door.*

POLYCARP.

Who is there?

Letters from Antioch for you, Ignatius.

[*Ignatius reads letter*

IGNATIUS.

Dirce is dead, Agathopus! I find,
One of the heathens passing in the tumult,
When we went off, struck her as 't were in sport,
And her glad soul took flight. The news th
follows
I can't conceal from you, my reverend brethren:
All things at Antioch, by our Saviour's care,
Are quiet now again: so tell the churches.
Were it not well if each would send some brother
To greet my flock upon the mercy shown them?
But still poor orphans, there's no bishop chosen:
Think of them Polycarp.

POLYCARP.

Your care, as pastor,
Shall leave its due impression on my breast.
For that be easy. And since now are met
Such distant bishops, presbyters, and deacons,
Well representing th' universal church,
Let me suggest employment for thia evening.

IGNATIUS.

What is it?

POLYCARP.

You, Ignatius, as our Lord
Will give you light, shall hint some general caution
Tending to keep the church through every age

From such corruptions as may hurt the plan,
Or cloud the purity it yet retains.

IGNATIUS.

With all my heart. Thou friend of souls direct us!
And ever guide all those on whom the charge,
The sacred charge of thy great mystery
(God in the flesh, saving by precious faith
Poor sinners) shall devolve in future times!
Long have I feared, there is a depth of Satan,
Which, from pretences fair, and warm pursuit
Of real parts, but not the proper centre
Of truth and holiness, will circumvent
The church at last. Strange the extremes would seem,
To which this well-poised soundness of our system
By partial aggravations may be wrought:
But worse, if possible, and more deplored
That infidel indifference which succeeds them.
For when so oft bewildered and deceived,
A general fastidious indolence
Fixes the mind, 'tis hard to move it more.
I calculate the fates of Christian faith
By dispositions in the make of men.
Three sorts I have observed. For some there are
Severe and solemn, like the Pharisees,
Allured by pomp and form. Some are again
Of fine and tender mould, and urge the path
Like Essenes,* of a rapturous devotion.

* There were three chief sects of the Jews: the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Of the two first, frequent mention is made in the gospels. The last made less noise, and seemed, at

And lastly, some (well turned for human life,
But the most fatal, when their day shall come,
To our religion) sit like Sadducees,
Cool moderators of their brethren's fires;
Their mark and inspiration common sense.
The first and last of these, as with the Jews,
May, in their turn, command the public stream.
The third have some eruptions more retired.

ONESIMUS.

Be pleased to show by what unhappy steps
Each of these spirits may deface the gospel.

IGNATIUS.

First, let me mention what is the great centre
And heart of it: which while it moves within,
And actuates, whatever outward frame
Of man's ideas, still there is one life,
Rich life wide ranging through varieties.
For have not we, even now, those several tastes
Amongst us? Yet hereby all sanctified.
Your conscious souls prevent me while I point
The anchor of your calling. 'Tis a faith
Depending only on the blood of Christ,
And nothing of our own, from first to last.

---

the time of our Lord's walking on earth, not to be so numerou
though they increased considerably afterwards. They maintaine
the resurrection of the body against the Sadducees; they wer
very devout and abstemious, but avoided the ostentation of th
Pharisees; they did not swear, they excommunicated those wh
did not walk orderly, and they were much given to fasting an
contemplation.

:eeps us now in great simplicity:
ıppy here, we lay no eager weight
ıer things, but use them in their place.
ity, I fear, will fail here soon,
us, in nakedness of faith to hang,
t whate'er we do, or know, or have,
·eign aid and merit; nor permit
: to say, she's owner of one thing:
; an edge so fine, 't will turn and warp;
ıore, because a raw and novice world
ıot be tender of it; having still
ny other plausible resorts,
:ourt the fancy, and are Christian too:
lux of the Spirit, ceremonies,
ıorals (to who list to see no more)
ristian law. Each several taste now lapsed,
ırse pursues, adorns some one of these.
ıft, contemplative, and Essene genius
nakes the noblest choice, and does least harm.

DAMAS.

to hear you paint the cause of that.

IGNATIUS.

ghostly energy and mystic life
: now feel within! We have this jewel;
ı its radiance do not choose to gaze
ly, but with humble hand hold fast
asket where it lies, Faith in Christ's blood.
ı the knowledge of that tenure fails,
warm devotionist will strive to fix
ıow departing Shekinah by nice

Though impotent descriptions; will reduce
All to a science, and to each attainment
Prescribe a way of art and false ambition.
See you how this may be?

DAMAS.

I see too plain
The Spirit's self on Jesus may be made
T' encroach.

IGNATIUS.

But this is light to what ensues.
We highly value now our solemn rites,
Symbols of love, and our Lord's protection:
And much we press obedience to the pastor.
But O, what I foresee may flow from this
In a dark age; when interest on one hand,
And on the other childishness of thought
And Pagan gloom, for superstition ripe,
Will by our use confirm that iron yoke!
The clergy will be lords, and endless forms
Hide from the church her Saviour's face.

POLYBIUS.

Alas,
That ordinances in his name begun
Should cease to preach Him only to poor souls!

IGNATIUS.

The worst is yet to come. When Christian faith
Has worn all weaknesses of the human spirit,
And been derided through them, 'twill be deemed

nt to appoint a jealous guardian,
and wild luxuriance to correct
strange principle. Low, and more low,
herous praise of its own moral precepts,
be brought in all it will persuade
from its diviner plan and power,
the measures of mere human life.
degrees bold reason recommends
a unmingled system, nature's light,
l not suffer on that scheme to hang
a long but tolerated, like the laws
uered countries) the bare name of Jesus.
ad died in vain, with great applause
ld rolls back to what it was before.

ONESIMUS.

a! Adam! We no more blame thee:
have tasted Paradise, and fell,
over Jesus to know good and evil.

IGNATIUS.

ay brethren, the last scene I've drawn
ch affects you; it drinks up your spirits:
all I say? 't won't be till distant ages.

ONESIMUS.

s extends to all: that's no relief.

IGNATIUS.

en I have (if I must bring it forth)
ill, I'm sure, the present grief expel,

Though not as I would wish. Look nearer home:
Are Smyrna, Ephesus, Magnesia dear t' you?

ONESIMUS.

Dearer than life.

IGNATIUS.

Then long before this plague
Shall overspread the earth, all these your churches
Shall lose their Christian glory, scarce retain
Savour of Christ, or symbol of their hope,
Ravaged and trodden down by infidels.

POLYBIUS.

Nay then we're silent! Judgments are to come,
And foul apostacies. Let us make haste
To die, my brethren, lest the gospel lamp
Go out before us.

DAMAS.

No, recall that word,
Howe'er distress or error may deform
The spouse of Christ, his love will ever last.
And when these storms are o'er, and man's each passion
Hath had its day, its swing and penitence
In holy things; then purest light again,
The sweet recovered infancy of faith,
Shall bless the earth, and introduce that kingdom,
Where Christ the King of Peace shall stand confessed,
Admired in all his saints and all his works.

POLYCARP.

This is the sum, my brethren! Christ is All:
If e'er we lean to other things we fall.
Spirit, and rites, and reason too are good,
If planted, and if glorying in his blood.
Faith is so simple, whence all good doth spring,
Mankind can't think it is so great a thing:
Still o'er this pearl steps their ambitious pride
Pursuing gladly any form beside.
Yet, O good Saviour! narrow as it is,
And delicate, and prone for man to miss,
Ne'er be the way shut up to this our bliss!
No, everlasting be thy gospel, Lord,
And through all time its saving power adored!

ROME, *just without the City.—The City Walls and Gate lying before, and some old Ruins on one hand.*

TWO PHILOSOPHERS.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

YOU seem to like this place, as if one step
Was precious from the follies of the town:
But you look musing. Pray what was the object?

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Why truly, the poor Christians. For it seems

This day, this Thirteenth of the Spectacles,
Some noted priest of theirs, a prisoner brought
In the last ship, shall be exposed to beasts.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

And are those silly wretches worth a thought?

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Perhaps worth several, brother. For you know
We who seek truth must not be prejudiced.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

I don't myself believe the monstrous stories
Reported of them; but I think them persons
Soft and precipitate to each new whim,
And not much us'd to reasoning.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Be it so.
But whence then comes their constancy in sufferin
Their more than Roman fortitude of spirit?

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

From great enthusiastic warmth.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Well said!
And will enthusiasm then (with all
The decencies of life and civil duty
Preserved) make men so generous and heroic?
For whether they be reasoners or no,
I'll give a reason why their sect should stand.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

uld not call in madness to support
rtue's self! Enthusiasm's no less.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

e recur to the first doubt: which was,
ɜr for those particular opinions,
thus inspire and heat them, they can show
l grounds? If so, it is not madness.
crutiny absolves them, if their lines
neral motives, which sustain all round
uith and conduct, be but rightly drawn:
er within this circle lies of bold,
ɜnt, or ecstatic, is referred
ulse of the deity they worship.
a quality in the whole nature,
ıarate from the tenet of enthusiasm,
ɔnsider.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

What is that?

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

'Tis joy,
ing of hearty, strong, and graceful actions,
ıakes all worth, all elegance of wit,
benevolence, but this one feeling,
good blood, from sense or ornament,
ıl good humour? Hence in vain
ɔhilosophers erect such minds,
can admit none of these genial charms:

They sink again. For we infuse but reason:
Not glowing health, nor fibres turned to honour;
Nor, like the Christian priests, can we convey,
A foreign joy more elevating yet,
Enthusiasm.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

What you say is just: but still
I'd not work up a rapture like those priests,
By doctrines so irrational and weak.
This joy is not a bad engine of virtue,
Had it a good foundation.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Stop and think!
Is it the movement, which perhaps alone
Can raise a lively and ingenuous flow
Of virtue, the free blossom of such minds
As are already happy; and hath God
Left no room, think you, or foundation for it?

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

Yes, you have shown 'tis wove with our complexion.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

That's not enough; if we such virtue mean,
(As sure we do who hold the soul immortal)
As looks beyond the use and present lustre
Of human life; and hath its great affair
With the Divinity, his grace or frown.
Here by analogy the rule's the same;
Joy precedes virtue: but it must be joy
Upon this state, and in this line of things:

votary must behold his God propitious,
elf admitted as an humble friend:
of heart, and confident henceforth;
will he rise to the great character,
ccellence of soul, that ne'er appeared
e this Entheon's interview with heaven.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

re got into the centre of their first
most obnoxious doctrine (for the other
me good spirit or divine afflatus
the mind may fairly be allowed.)
very proselyte at first admission
innocence they lend; whate'er his crimes
:e have been, he's white, and free, and just,
equalled with the veterans of virtue,
wears the laurel, then begins the fight.
e this consistent, and I'll ask no more.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

nk I can. For let us now suppose,
hat rejoices, is by force of that
os'd for good; and he, who by some glance
1 the mild deity, triumphs in his love,
es then to higher good; displays at once,
'ever abject or perverse before,
nting gratitude and holy worth:
, one may with virtue be endowed
nce.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

But this is rarely seen.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

'Tis true,
Yet the objection does not drive me back
From what benign effects I said would follow
On joy divine: but urge me to inquire
Why this kind glance is not bestowed on all?

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

That I can tell. Because mankind are under
The power of vice.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

That cannot be; for this
Is what destroys that power which never melts
But at this fire.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

Yet may not ranker vice,
Foul with its brutish habits, be in nature
A bar to th' operation?

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Not at all.
This joy, if given, does there the very same
As in clear minds, it meets the ingenuous springs
Of our great soul concealed beneath the rubbish.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

But 'tis not given, yourself then tell us why.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

God is a governor; and acts indeed

s political, and not as we
trace him still with geometric scale,
e connections and capacities
ical existence. Hence pure guilt,
nd affront, and breach of covenant,
range to us ! tie up the hand
ight, if simple nature were considered,
moment work all virtues in us.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

s the obstacle, then its removal
ll be sudden, and all good flow in.
ristians do indeed employ their care
t itself; so taught by old tradition
ing from the Jews. And now methinks
e farther in their scheme. If God
you represent him, and withholds
ering presence from the human mind
ves politic; then on the like
restore it. Guilt's political;
external merit is no more.
I thought ridiculous indeed,
ey account themselves beloved of God
t another did.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

'Twas, I suppose,
ounder.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

Yes.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Why this is (as you say)
Good in the use and equity of state,
That to a corporation from its head
Merit should pass, and dignity dilated
Clothe every branch with honours of the root.
And truly, I've long looked on this expedient
As the most fit and delicately suited
To give at once both room for God to bless
Nor yet make man or petulant or proud.
The late dark sky and images of guilt
Keep their reality: but only serve
T' illustrate present safety: as we see
The broken weapons, hideous to behold,
Brighten and triumph o'er some barbarous land.
Man now is happy; but 'tis plain by whom!
Not by himself; the Patron stands before
To face the Godhead, and obtain its gifts:
He at a distance terminates his care
And glad though feeble service pays this Friend,
His own, his softer and compendious God.
What a sweet passion to this Benefactor;
What plain infantile gaiety of heart,
And yet what outward greatness of deportment:
In short, what a new set of sentiments
Would burst from the recesses of the soul,
Which would believe itself divine and happy,
Through the whole length of ages, and all this
By the mere love and wonderful achievement
Of One who left such merits once, and still affords
His virtual presence to his friends!

All this I do, I must imagine—though
I'll speak no more, lest you should think me Christian.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

Whoe'er thinks me not much their enemy
Henceforward, shall not put me to the blush.
As for their meetings and their private rules,
They're a society, and so must have them.

SECOND PHILOSOPHER.

Enough! Here comes the martyr, we'll retire.

FIRST PHILOSOPHER.

We are not worthy now, good man, to stay
And join thy train; another time we may.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter Ignatius guarded by Soldiers—several Roman Christians accompany him—Agathopus and Philo following after.

IGNATIUS, ROMAN CHRISTIANS, &c.

IGNATIUS.

'Twas very kind, my brethren, that you came
So far to meet us. Had I been permitted,
In honour of the steps of holy Paul,
I from Puteoli on foot had travelled.

Thus far 'tis well! This is imperial Rome;
And I a bishop from the distant East,
Now see the countries of the setting sun:
I too am come to set! but rise again
In Jesus Christ.

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

Are you resolved to die?
We could perhaps induce the people yet
Not to require you for their savage sports.

IGNATIUS.

O don't attempt it! Ne'er shall I again
Have such a gale to waft me to my God.
Were I like Paul and Peter, a freed man
In Christ, and perfect, to make no such motion,
I would command you. I am yet a slave:
But do entreat you not to hinder me,
For by this death I shall obtain my freedom.

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

Are there no motives to persuade your life?

IGNATIUS.

No, I have nothing more to do on earth.
My loves and my desires are crucified;
There's not a spark of fire or warmth within me
To things below: but that same living water
Promised by Jesus hath extinguished all.
It springs to life eternal in my heart,
And calls me onward only to the Father.
Tedious to me is corruptible food,

And every joy of life. The bread of God
I hunger for, the flesh of Jesus Christ:
His blood I'd drink; that is, I would be made
Immortal with him in the state of love.
I do not wish to be one moment longer
This man, this dark and miserable being:
And though I'm yet alive (you see I am
Because I speak) my heart is all on death.

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

But 'tis a cruel death that they intend you.

IGNATIUS.

Let fire, and cross, and troops of ravenous beasts,
Let tearing, grinding of this total frame,
Let every art of pain the devil owns,
Come on me, so I but enjoy my Jesus.
I am God's wheat, the lion's jaw must bruise it.
So shall I make clean bread fit to present
In God's high sanctuary.

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

But cannot you,
O reverend father, be a friend of Christ,
And yet continue here?

IGNATIUS.

O no, I cannot,
I can't be true to the great mystery,
The life of faith, while in the world I'm seen.
Nothing that can be seen is fully right:
And only then I am a good disciple,

When even my body (though but in the paunch
Of a brute beast, and by a change of forms)
Is yet withdrawn from this bad world's inspection.
There has one object been disclosed on earth
That might commend the place; but now 'tis gone:
Jesus is with the Father, and demands
His members to be there. Him do I seek
Who died, who rose for us. In gaining him,
I shall be rich enough. Pardon me, brethren!
You must not stand between me and my life,
Nor weigh me down when I ascend to God.
No, let me now pass upwards to partake
Unsullied light, and be what he would have me.
No, let me now the passion imitate
Of Christ my God. Do any of you feel
Him in your heart? Then you can sympathize.
You know my straits, what sacred ties I'm under.

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

We'll not resist you more: God's will be done.

IGNATIUS.

Pray tell me, keepers, There on our left hand,
That mossy fragment of a wall, what is it?

SOLDIER.

'Tis an old burying-place now laid aside.

IGNATIUS.

Laid aside, said you? So shall all this world
Be soon. Good soldiers, let me lean against it
One moment. Brethren, shan't we pray together?
[*Ignatius kneeling by the old wall.*

IGNATIUS.

ıanks to thy love, almighty Son of God,
'hich, o'er the steps of all my life extending,
ıve me to know thy name and saving might:
ıd now to taste the bliss of dying for thee.
'ant to the churches rest and mutual love,
ıd holy gifts, and lively confidence
thee. Bring on the blessed end of all things.
[*The brethren whisper and stand up.*
'hat is't, my friends?

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

The sports are just concluding,
ıd you in haste are sent for.

IGNATIUS.

I am ready,
ome soldiers, come Agathopus and Philo! you,
ɔme of you, friends, keep praying in this place.
[*Exeunt Ignat. Sold. Philo and Agath. to the Amphitheatre. Manent some Roman Christians.*

FIRST ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

/ho can help praying now? My very soul
on the stretch, and busy with her God,
bout some big request I cannot utter,
or comprehend.

SECOND ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

The time of great affliction,
r great suspense is sacred, and exceeds
he common bounds of thinking.

FIRST ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

And of power,
For sure, 'till now, I never felt such strength
And energy of spirit: flesh and the world
No more retard me, than if not in being.
I would do something! Would do any thing!
For some eternal nerves are waked within me,
Some strange alacrity, which, if it lasted,
Would be the body's death, and shake it off
Without or puny sickness or a groan.

SECOND ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

But stop, my brother, let us now be faithful
To the good martyr's orders, and pray for him.

FIRST ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

I pray too much for words. I pray for all things,
All time, and all eternity at once,
What would you more?

SECOND ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

Only to recollect
And stand in awful silence here awhile
Before our heavenly Master, doing no more
But this, to have Ignatius on our heart.

FIRST ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

Content.

THIRD AND FOURTH ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

O Lord, be present with thy servants!

[*They pray some time silently.*

SECOND ROMAN CHRISTIAN.

I am forced myself to break the silence.
you perceive that breath of purer air
ch spread a sweet simplicity and calm
our soul? Indeed the Lord is with us!
cy this mild signal showed the moment
en great Ignatius mounted to the skies.
so; for see, the deacon comes to tell us.

Enter PHILO.

PHILO.

stians rejoice! Your brother is at rest,
in the arms of Christ, above the toils
hazards of an earthly pilgrimage.

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

manner of his martyrdom we long
hear.

PHILO.

'Twas quickly o'er. Two hungry lions,
t for him, were let loose with a loud shout,
mingled horror of some softer hearts
ough the whole amphitheatre. He first
ked up to heaven, and then let gently fall
eyes to earth, as one whose suit was heard,
needed that he should solicit more.
so it was even to a circumstance.
always wished there might, if possible,

Be no remains of his, which we survivors
Might stoop to gather, or regard as martyrs.
And very few are left (Agathopus
And Claudius glean what is) he has his grave
Completely in the beasts, the place which he
With such particular pleasure destined for it:
I saw this pleasure in his looks; and 'twas
The last I saw of him: for while he stood
As one that would have stroked the grisly brutes,
They seized upon him, and devoured him up.

Enter AGATHOPUS *and* CLAUDIUS.

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

And did he leave us then no dying words?

PHILO.

He scarce had time to speak, yet said something,
A word or two, but I could not hear what.

AGATHOPUS.

I'll tell you, brethren, what Ignatius said:
What his death preaches to you.—Let your life
Be hid with Christ. Choke not by worldly care,
Or earthly joy, that emanation fair
Of Christ's own mind, the new implanted seed
Of Christian holiness: but ever feed
And more expand it by the works of love,
And following your good instincts from above.
For not in vain, or with some low design
Were you ingrafted into Christ your vine:

you with him, in whom your whole trust lies,
l to divine inheritances rise;
d with Ignatius on that better shore,
lear to Christ as he that went before!

PHILO.

e we disperse. Agathopus and I
ırn to Antioch. Where are you, Claudius,
ered to be.

CLAUDIUS.

At Rome.

PLILO.

Then here you see
brethren you must join with.
[*Roman Christians giving him the hand.*

ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

Take the pledge
earest love and fellowship immortal.

CLAUDIUS.

first instructors, by whose friendly voice
rnt to trust in Jesus! Must I part
ı you?

AGATHOPUS.

Yes, Claudius, and 'tis no great thing.
with these friends must part; both with Ignatius.
r ere their thirsty souls had time to know
knit with his; we after a strict union

Of many years. With our exterior state
'Tis thus. But Christ within is ever sure,
The same in youth and age, at Rome or Anti
One source of joy to each believing breast,
Where we all drink, and live, and meet at la

POEMS AND HYMNS.

POEMS AND HYMNS.

RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE.

To speak for God, to sound religion's praise,
Of sacred passions the wise warmth to raise:
T' infuse the contrite wish to conquest nigh,
And point the steps mysterious as they lie;
To seize the wretch in full career of lust,
And sooth the silent sorrows of the just:
Who would not bless for this the gift of speech,
And in that tongue's beneficence be rich?

But who must talk? Not the mere modern sage,
Who suits the softened gospel to the age:
Who ne'er to raise degenerate practice strives,
But brings the precept down to Christian lives.
Not he, who maxims from cold reading took,
And never saw himself but through a book:
Not he, who hasty in the morn of grace,
Soon sinks extinguished as a comet's blaze:
Not he, who strains in scripture-phrase t' abound,
Deaf to the sense, who stuns us with the sound:
But he, who silence loves, and never dealt
In the false commerce of a truth unfelt.

Guilty you speak, if subtle from within
Blows on your words the self-admiring sin:
If unresolved to choose the better part,
Your forward tongue belies your languid heart:
But then speak safely, when your peaceful mind
Above self-seeking blest, on God reclined,
Feels him at once suggest unlaboured sense.
And ope a sluice of sweet benevolence.
Some high behests of heaven you then fulfil,
Sprung from his light your words, and issuing
his will.

Nor yet expect so mystically long,
Till certain inspiration loose your tongue:
Express the precept runs, "Do good to all:"
Nor adds, "Whene'er you find an inward call."
'Tis God commands: no farther motive seek,
Speak or without, or with reluctance speak:
To love's habitual sense by acts aspire,
And kindle, till you catch the gospel-fire.

Discoveries immature of truth decline,
Nor prostitute the gospel-pearl to swine.
Beware, too rashly how you speak the whole,
The vileness, or the treasures of your soul.
If spurned by some, where weak on earth you li
If judged a cheat or dreamer, where you fly;
Here the sublimer strain, th' exerted air
Forego; you're at the bar, not in the chair.

To the pert reasoner if you speak at all,
Speak what within his cognizance may fall:

Expose not truths divine to reason's rack,
Give him his own beloved ideas back,
Your notions till they look like his dilute;
Blind he must be—but safe him from dispute!
But when we're turned of reason's noontide glare,
And things begin to show us what they are,
More free to such your true conceptions tell;
Yet graft them on the arts where they excel.
If sprightly sentiments detain their taste;
If paths of various learning they have traced;
If their cool judgment longs, yet fears to fix:
Fire, erudition, hesitation mix.

All rules are dead; 'tis from the heart you draw
The living lustre, and unerring law.
A state of thinking in your manner show,
Nor fiercely soaring, nor supinely low:
Others their lightness and each inward fault
Quench in the stillness of your deeper thought.
Let all your gestures fixed attention draw,
And wide around infuse infectious awe;
Present with God by recollection seem,
Yet present, by your cheerfulness, with them.

Without elation Christian glories paint,
Nor by fond amorous phrase assume the saint.
Greet not frail men with compliments untrue;
With smiles to peace confirmed and conquests due,
There are who watch t' adore the dawn of grace,
And pamper the young proselyte with praise:
Kind, humble souls! They with a right good-will
Admire his progress—till he stands stock still.

Speak but to thirsty minds of things divine,
Who strong for thought, are free in yours to join.
The busy from his channel parts with pain,
The languid loathes an elevated strain:
With these you aim but at good-natured chat,
Where all except the love, is low and flat.

Not one address will different tempers fit,
The grave and gay, the heavy and the wit.
Wits will sift you; and most conviction find
Where least 'tis urged, and seems the least designed.
Slow minds are merely passive; and forget
Truths not inculcated: to these repeat,
Avow your counsel, nor abstain from heat,

Some gentle souls to gay indifference true,
Nor hope, nor fear, nor think the more for you:
Let love turn babbler here, and caution sleep,
Blush not for shallow speech, nor muse for deep;
These to your humour, not your sense attend,
'Tis not the advice that sways them, but the friend.

Others have large recesses in their breast:
With pensive process all they hear digest;
Here well-weighed words with wary foresight sow,
For all you say will sink, and every seed will grow.

At first acquaintance press each truth severe,
Stir the whole odium of your character:
Let harshest doctrines all your words engross,
And nature bleeding on the daily cross.

Then to yourself th' ascetic rule enjoin,
To others stoop, surprisingly benign;
Pitying, if from themselves with pain they part,
If stubborn nature long holds out the heart.
Their outworks now are gained; forbear to press:
The more you urge them, you prevail the less;
Let speech lay by its roughness to oblige,
Your speaking life will carry on the siege:
By your example struck, to God they strive
To live, no longer to themselves alive.

To positive adepts insidious yield,
To ensure the conquest, seem to quit the field:
Large in your grants; be their opinion shown:
Approve, amend—and wind it to your own.
Touch in your hints, if more resigned they hear,
Both what they will be soon, and what they are:
Pleasing these words now to the conscious breast,
Th' anticipating voice hereafter blest.

In souls just waked the paths of light to choose,
Convictions keen, and zeal of prayer infuse.
Let them love rules; till freed from passion's reign,
Till blameless moral rectitude they gain.

But lest reformed from each extremer ill,
They should but civilize old nature still,
The loftier charms and energy display
Of virtue modell'd by the Godhead's ray;
The lineaments divine, Perfection's plan,
And all the grandeur of the heavenly Man.

Commences thus the agonizing strife
Previous to nature's death, and second life:
Struck by their own inclement piercing eye,
Their feeble virtue's blush, subside, and die:
They view the scheme that mimic nature made,
A fancied goddess, and religion's shade;
With angry scorn they now reject the whole,
Unchanged their heart, undeified their soul;
Till indignation sleeps away to faith,
And God's own power and peace take root in sacred wrath.

Aim less to teach than love. The work begun
In words, is crown'd by artless warmth alone.
Love to your friend a second office owes,
Yourself and him before heaven's footstool throws:
You place his form as suppliant by your side,
(An helpless worm, for whom the Saviour died)
Into his soul call down th' ethereal beam,
And longing ask to spend, and to be spent for him.

ON THE DEATH OF THE REV. MR. CENNICK.

Thou generous soul! to me thy path shines bright:
Happy thy choice, and exquisitely right!
Blameless in all that constitutes a man,
Or man can e'er demand, admire or scan,
Thy keener eye yet higher fountains viewed,
Whence a divine immortal rectitude,
Must clothe the best, as worst, thro' Jesus' blood.

en the warmth, wherewith to reptiles vain
counsel thou, undaunted, didst maintain;
ıext, the mourners thou could'st gird with
ower
great Master's name, so that one hour
mer gloom and guilt in heavenly joy devour:
astly, to that heart, whose godlike zeal
e rough steel to work this general weal,
art with private gratitude did burn,
ears of love filled up its votive urn;
weetest monument, which man's spirit here,
deeds more echoed, can in silence rear.

breast with pain do these reflections fill,
not censuring the all-wise will:
rom our streets did such a torch retire,
reigning night insults all sacred fire,
it long buried as in Erro's days,
alks securely Pagan, o'er the place!

my heart bleeds—my God has lost a friend!
hristians teach, our God could condescend
, yea, suffer for a time, and die:
ess, unheeded, walks poor Jesus by.)
have lost one too, who very low,
with the gospel promises, could go;
most hopeless souls to comfort raised,
ith renewed hearts their Saviour praised.
shall I say? I'm loser too and lame—
ıg the helper, I'll enshrine the name!
raise my ardour, and direct my aim.

TO A FRIEND IN LOVE.

Accept, dear youth, a sympathising lay,
The only tribute pitying love can pay:
Though vain the hope thine anguish to assuage,
Charm down desire, or calm fierce passion's rage:
Yet still permit me in thy griefs to grieve,
Relief to offer, if I can't relieve;
Near thy sick couch with fond concern t' attend,
And reach out cordials to my dying friend.

Poor hapless youth! what words can ease thy pain;
When reason pleads, and wisdom cries in vain!
Can feeble verse impetuous nature guide,
Or stem the force of blind affection's tide?
If reason checks, or duty disallows,
"Reason, you cry, and duty are my foes:
Religion's dictates ineffectual prove,
And God himself's impertinence in Love."

What art thou, love? Thou strange mysterious ill,
Whom none aright can know, though all can feel.
From careless sloth thy dull existence flows,
And feeds the fountain whence itself arose:
Silent its waves with baleful influence roll,
Damp the young mind, and sink th' aspiring soul,
Poison its virtues, all its powers restrain,
And blast the promise of the future man.

curst fiend, the captive wretch consigned
ssions rampant, and his reason blind,"
ıeaven's great vicegerent, dares disown,
: a foolish idol in its throne:
raise his frantic raptures higher,
out blasphemies at thy desire.
esire he bids a creature shine,
a worm with attributes divine;
angelic beauties dares prefer,
are painted fair, to look like her!"
ır shrine the lowly suppliant laid,
ıe idol that himself has made:
almighty breath his doom receives,
ıer frown, as by her smile he lives.
she reigns in all-sufficient state,
e bows, from her expects his fate,
ı in her love, damnation in her hate."
unhallowed altars to her name,
ıst lights up a black polluted flame;
ghs impure, as impious incense rise,
he priest, his heart the sacrifice:
God's sacred word his horrid prayer
ılies.

tre of all perfection, source of bliss,
thy creature lives, and moves, and is,
I perish! hear my humble prayer,
poor servant—O in mercy spare.
my joy, on thee alone I trust,
thy face, nor frown me into dust.
h thy breath, and raised again I see
my life, my final bliss in thee.

For thee I am; for thee I all resign;
Be thou my one thing needful, ever mine!"

But O forbear, presumptuous muse, forbear,
Nor wound with rant profane the Christian ear:
A just abhorrence in my friend I see,
He starts from love, when love's idolatry,
"Give me thy heart," if the Creator cries,
"'Tis given the creature," what bold wretch replies?
Not so my friend—he wakes, he breathes again,
And "reason takes once more the slackened rein."
In vain rebellious nature claims a part,
When heaven requires, he gives up all his heart:
("For love divine no partnership allows,
And heaven averse rejects divided vows.")
Fixed though she be, he rends the idol thence,
Nor lets her power exceed Omnipotence.
Commands his God, "Cut off th' offending hand!"
He hears, obedient to his God's command:
"Pluck out thine eye," let the Redeemer say;
He tears, and casts the bleeding orb away.
Victorious now to nobler joys aspires,
His bosom, touched with more than earthly fires:
He leaves rough passion for calm virtue's road,
Gives earth for heaven, and quits a worm for God.

'AKING UP A BIRD SHOT THROUGH THE WING.

this poor bird some hours ago,
trength of wing, and freedom know.
:e'er his little will would steer,
aced each landscape far and near;
'elt each joy the neighbouring field
rtuoso bird could yield.
ery halt the shades among,
ul and ready flowed his song;
iirp'd in self-applauding lay,
:e'er a joyful heart could say.
iost his conscious soul was blest,
i of aerial walk possessed,
ould look down on man and beast.
ere the purer breezes play,
glitters the superior day,
grow more stately than before,
lrink in pride through every pore.
ow, no boastful notes he sings,
ore he wields his former wings;
wly earth his path now lies,
ie's a reptile, till he dies.
ien to high abstractions wrought
ie machinery of thought;
iges, skilled in nature, tell)
ons of contemplation fell.
magic dart, in silence thrown,
iman life has fetched them down;

With other mortals humbly mixed,
Their courage quailed, their wing transfixed.

While thus with tender moan I talked,
And held him in my hand and walked;
His head the bird with languor waved,
His eyes grew dull, his bosom heaved,
His plumes were of their gloss bereaved.
On the next hedge I perched him fair;
High and well poised in fresher air:
In vain—that wing no more must fly!
That fainting heart forgets the sky:
He sunk amidst the thickets low,
Obedient to his weight of woe.
I bade the boughs that o'er him spread
Gently to hide his luckless head.

ON LOWNESS OF SPIRITS.

In nature's ebbs, which lay the soul in chains
Beneath weak nerves, and ill-sufficing veins;
Who can support bare being, unendowed
With gust voluptuous, or reflection proud?
No more bright images the brain commands,
No great design the glowing heart expands,—
No longer shines the animated face,
Motion and speech forget their conscious grace
How can the brave, the witty, and the gay

Survive when mirth, wit, courage—die away?
None but the Christian's all-comprising power
Subdues each chance, and lives through every hour:
Watchful he suffers all—and feels within
All smart proportioned to some root of sin;
He strikes each error with his Maker's rod,
And by self-knowledge penetrates to God.

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE.

So many years I've seen the sun,
And called these eyes and hands my own,
A thousand little acts I've done,
And childhood have, and manhood known:
O what is life! and this dull round
To tread, why was a spirit bound?

So many airy draughts and lines,
And warm excursions of the mind,
Have filled my soul with great designs,
While practice grovell'd far behind:
O what is thought! and where withdraw
The glories which my fancy saw?

So many tender joys and woes
Have on my quivering soul had power;
Plain life with heightening passions rose,
The boast or burden of their hour:

O what is all we feel! why fled
Those pains and pleasures o'er my head?

So many human souls divine,
  So at one interview displayed,
Some oft and freely mixed with mine,
  In lasting bonds my heart have laid:
O what is friendship! why impressed
On my weak, wretched, dying breast?

So many wondrous gleams of light,
  And gentle ardours from above,
Have made me sit, like seraph bright,
  Some moments on a throne of love:
O what is virtue! why had I,
Who am so low, a taste so high?

Ere long, when sovereign wisdom wills,
  My soul an unknown path shall tread,
And strangely leave, who strangely fills
  This frame, and waft me to the dead:
O what is death! 'tis life's last shore,
Where vanities are vain no more;
Where all pursuits their goal obtain,
And life is all retouched again;
Where in their bright result shall rise
Thoughts, virtues, friendships, griefs, and joys.

TO A FRIEND ON HIS BIRTH-DAY.

From life's whole drama half-retired
My breast with nought poetic fired,
(If e'er the muse dwelt there)
Whence shall I take the tribute meet
Of votive lays, wherewith to greet
Thy new commencing year?

I'll take it from a spring ne'er lost
Midst Hermit's apathy and frost,
Or lethe of old age:
No! it still bubbles fresh and young,
When nature's tone is all unstrung,
And thoughts even leave the sage.

This never-failing source is love,
As human instinct raised above
All other human things;
But as a new birth from the heat
Of the prime lover's pangs and sweat,
Fledged with immortal wings.

This gives me words, (which, though but few,
Yet in their central import true
All optatives comprise:)
The Lord, who bought thee by his blood
Keep thee endowed with all the good
Which in his merit lies!

He daily sunlike on thee shine,
Dispel all clouds and cheer within
The happy child of grace:
Give thee with tenderness to feel,
With zeal to love, and so fulfil
The orbit of thy race!

ON LISTENING TO THE VIBRATIONS OF A CLOCK.

INSTRUCTIVE sound! I'm now convinced by thee,
Time in its womb may bear infinity,
How the past moment dies, and throbs no more!
What worlds of parts compose the rolling hour!
The least of these a serious care demands;
For though they're little, yet they're golden sands:
By some great deeds distinguished all in heaven,
For the same end to me by number given!
Cease, man, to lavish sums thou ne'er hast told!
Angels though deathless, dare not be so bold!

A PIECE WRITTEN AT A TIME WHEN UNDER THE APPREHENSION OF LOSING HIS SENSES.

A FOOL, bereft of common wit,
If God will make me, I submit,
The jests and laughter I can brook,
Raised by my odd, dejected look;

To any, cheaply sly, or brave,
I'll be a property and slave;
A ground in empty fops to cause
A tickling, secret self-applause;
But to more sober minds—a call,
To think what ills may man befall,
No science more, no learned design,
No favourite system now is mine;
Each keen pretension I disclaim,
Nor hear the sprightly trump of fame:
Quiet the world flows on for me,
Under its chiefs, whoe'er they be:
I'll die—so from endearments clear,
So useless, none will drop a tear.
Remembrance, Lord! with thee alone
Will be of—lately such a one:
And well I know this lamp of mine,
Now interrupted in its shine,
The good resolves—so soon defaced,
The loves which dark disquiet blast,
Shall be revived another day,
When nothing shall their force betray.
Thy healing light, if I partake,
The fool shall in full wisdom wake:
Is ignorance more, than learning, blind
To truths which blissful love must find:
Love grant me now—howe'er obscure—
To fix the heart I can't secure;
To guard the steps, if anguish drive,
If thought becalmed—no more survive,
Or blazing thick the eye deceive.

Under this shield I'll view serene
Whate'er mischance may supervene;
Attentive, how the stingless ill
His friendly message doth fulfil;—
Which can't my future glory spoil,
And will conclude my present toil.
One of your kind, my human friends,
But for one boon the kind pretends:
Beneath your notice thus deprest,
Let him lie down, and be at rest:
Sage thoughts, like thunder-stricken oak,
In each spectator he'll provoke.
May some one guard, when your are dead
From all licentious wrongs your head;
As you with decent heed revere
Your poor unliving brother here:
For why is censure spent in vain
On deeds of incoherent brain?
Those under no account can fall,
Or if they can, are sealed up all:
For, though on earth this spectre roam,
He's of no world, but that to come.

THE CORRECTIVE.

Unskilful while my eye explores
The sage Apothecary's stores

With baneful names inscribed,
Of venom from each mineral mould,
Of plants, which breathe delirious cold,
Or hotter suns imbibed:

ch drugs, quoth I, whose ice or fire
ainst the vital mean conspire,
Remove such drugs as these:
is to a furnace frets the blood,
rcotic that arrests the flood,
And both are—more disease.

Softly! said he: each fiercer juice,
To charm and bend it to our use,
Has some corrective nigh;
Thus harmless through the veins 'twill shoot,
And—native poison at the root,
Will raise the cordial high.

is secret now to man apply:
not our peccant humours die
Beneath a friend's control?
is can retrench our rage to worth,
d call the first idea forth,
And balance all the soul.

Our genius erst pursued its course,
Like spirits of too sublimate force,
And worked itself to wind;
But now it moves a measured length
With temper now, and ancient strength,
In vehicles enshrined.

Go then—your own corrective seek,
That to your fire shall add the meek,
And to your phlegm the gay;
Without his will—taste not your own,
The potion's poison, when alone,
And you are born to stray.

With this refiner of your heart,
You'll feel—the image of your art,
A gentle mixture made;
You of his joy serene possessed,
And your chagrin within his breast
Acknowledged, spent and laid.

Nor will he give th' ingredients crude,
His ways in gross on you obtrude,
Which should your genius spoil;
With nicer hand he'll but instil
What best incorporates with your will,
The tincture—or the oil.

SHE THAT LIVETH IN PLEASURE, IS DEAD WHILE SHE LIVETH.

1 Tim. v. 6.

How hapless is th' applauded virgin's lot,
Her God forgetting, by her God forgot!
Stranger to truth, unknowing to obey,
In error nursed, and disciplined to stray;

oln with self-will, and principled with pride,
ıse all her good, and passion all her guide:
asure its tide, and flattery lends its breath,
d smoothly waft her to eternal death!

A goddess here, she sees her votaries meet,
›wd to her shrine, and tremble at her feet;
› hears their vows, believes their life and death
ngs on the wrath and mercy of her breath;
›reme in fancied state she reigns her hour,
d glories in her plenitude of power:
rself the only object worth her care,
ce all the kneeling world was made for her.

For her creation all its stores displays,
e silkworms labour, and the diamonds blaze:
, earth, and sea conspire to tempt her taste,
d ransacked nature furnishes the feast.
e's gaudiest pride attracts her willing eyes,
d balls, and theatres, and courts arise:
lian songsters pant her ear to please,
l the first cries of infant reason cease,
/e her from thought, and lull her soul to peace.

Deep sunk in sense th' imprisoned soul remains,
r knows its fall from God, for feels its chains:
conscious still, sleeps on in error's night,
r strives to rise, nor struggles into light;
aven-born in vain, degenerate cleaves to earth,
› pangs experienced of the second birth)
› only fall'n, yet unawakened found,
ıile all th' enthralled creation goans around.

HYMN.

THAT "I am thine, my Lord and God:
Sprinkled and ransomed by thy blood,"—
Repeat that word once more!
With such an energy and light,
That this world's flattery nor spite
To shake me never may have power.

From various cares my heart retires;
Though deep and boundless its desires,
I'm now to please but one:
He, before whom the elders bow,
With him is all my business now,
And with the souls that are his own.

This is my joy (which ne'er can fail,)
To see my Saviour's arm prevail;
To mark the steps of grace:
How new-born souls convinced of sin,
His blood revealed to them within,
Extol my Lamb in every place.

With these my happy lot is cast!
Through the world's deserts rude and waste,
Or through its gardens fair;
Whether the storm of malice sweeps,
Or all in dead supineness sleeps;
Still to go on be my whole care.

See! the deer sheep by Jesus drawn,
In blest simplicity move on;
  They trust his shepherd's crook:
Beholders many faults will find,
But they can guess at Jesus' mind,
  Content, if written in his book.

O all ye wise, ye rich, ye just,
Who the blood's doctrine have discuss'd,
  And judge it weak and slight:
Grant but I may (the rest's your own)
In shame and poverty sit down
  At this one well-spring of delight!

Indeed if Jesus ne'er was slain,
Or ought can make his ransom vain,
  That now it heals no more;
If his heart's tenderness is fled;
If of a church he is not head,
  Nor Lord of all, as heretofore:

Then, (so refers my state to him)
Unwarranted I must esteem,
  And wretched all I do—
Ah, my heart throbs! and seizes fast
That covenant which will ever last;
  It knows, it knows these things are true.

No, my dear Lord, in following thee,
Not in the dark uncertainty
  This foot obedient moves;

'Tis with a Brother and a King,
Who many to his yoke will bring,
  Who ever lives and ever loves.

Now then, my Way, my Truth, my Life!
Henceforth let sorrow, doubt and strife,
  Drop off like autumn leaves;
Henceforth, as privileged by thee,
Simple and undistracted be
  My soul, which to thy sceptre cleaves.

Let me my weary mind recline
On that eternal love of thine,
  And human thoughts forget;
Childlike attend what thou wilt say;
Go forth and do it while 'tis day,
  Yet never leave my sweet retreat.

At all times to my spirit bear
An inward witness, soft and clear,
  Of thy redeeming power:
This will instruct thy child and fit,
Will sparkle forth whate'er is right,
  For exigence of every hour.

Thus all the sequel is well weighed!
I cast myself upon thy aid,
  A sea where none can sink;
Yea, in that sphere I stand, poor worm!
Where thou wilt for thy name perform
  Beyond whate'er I ask or think.

HYMN.

O TELL me no more
Of this world's vain store;
time for such trifles with me now is o'er.

A country I've found,
Where true joys abound;
dwell I'm determined on that happy ground.

The souls that believe
In paradise live:
l me in that number will Jesus receive.

My soul, don't delay,
He calls thee away!
e, follow thy Saviour, and bless the glad day.

No mortal doth know
What he can bestow,
ıat light, strength, and comfort: go after him, go!

Lo! onward I move,
And but Christ above
ıe guesses, how wondrous my journey will prove.

Great spoils I shall win
From death, hell, and sin;
idst outward afflictions, shall feel Christ within.

Perhaps for his name,
Poor dust as I am,
Some works I shall finish with glad loving aim.

I still (which is best)
Shall in his dear breast,
As at the beginning, find pardon and rest.

And when I'm to die,
"Receive me," I'll cry,
For Jesus hath loved me, I cannot say why.

But this I do find,
We two are so joined,
He'll not live in glory and leave me behind.

Lo, this is the race
I'm running, through grace,
Henceforth, till admitted to see my Lord's face.

And now I'm in care,
My neighbour's may share
These blessings: to seek them, will none of you dare?

In bondage, O why,
And death will you lie,
When one here assures you free grace is so nigh?

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.

THOU thinking, throbbing particle within,
Closely endeared companion, though unseen,
Self-conscious soul! now from the falling clay
Whither, ah whither lies thy lonely way?
Stripped of the body's organs and embrace
What fates await thee in the darksome space?
Say (for presage divine is given to thee)
Nor dare to say, but what thou'lt surely be.
My feeble partner! in thy fears
Nature's concern and voice appears:
But I a tutelar power have known,
Nigh to me as my flesh and bone,
(For he and I are mystic one:
When thy pulse fails and eye grows dim,
Still I have light, and live with him.
Nor wonder, I th' ensuing way
Can with such confidence survey;
The solace of the years I've lived,
Has been already things believed;
Pardon of sin, the smiles of God,
Purchased by this my Guardian's blood:
His plighted love and influence pure,
Than thy sensations not less sure.
Have made this thought even tenderer to my heart,
That Jesus I shall see, than that from thee I part.

EPITAPH ON HIMSELF.

Ask not, who ended here his span?
His name, reproach and praise, was man.
Did no great deeds adorn his course?
No deed of his, but showed him worse:
One thing was great, which God supplied,
He suffered human life—and died.
What points of knowledge did he gain?
That life was sacred all—and vain:
Sacred how high, and vain how low?
He knew not here, but died to know.

SERMONS.

Christianity Tidings of Joy:

A SERMON.*

LUKE ii. 10.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

THE appearance of the angel of the Lord to the shepherds, to acquaint them of our Saviour's birth, was very proper and suitable to the dignity of such a nativity. Whether we consider the angels as a higher and actually happy order of intelligent beings, kindly congratulating the salvation of the human race; or whether we regard them as the messengers of the great God, sent down to do honour to his Son, and make a part of the credentials of his mission; or whether we look upon them as the appointed retinue of the *Logos* himself,

* Preached before the University of Oxford, at St. Mary's, on Sunday, December 27th, 1741. Published at the request of the Vice-Chancellor.

attending their own Captain even on his earthly pilgrimage: in every light, their acting thus, was a decent circumstance of the nativity of Christ. The shepherds likewise may be considered as persons of a low condition, and of plain and honest minds, keeping up, as it were, the old patriarchal simplicity of life; and therefore the fittest of any to be the first courtiers of that King, who, without secular ornaments, and against human probabilities, was to restore peace and a golden age to mankind: and their being called too in the dead of night, when all others were asleep, did but too truly represent what is so often and awfully remarked as incident to the gospel, I mean, to pass unobserved and unregarded by the unbelieving world, and to take effect only with a few waking minds. The angel that appeared, and spoke first, was the principal messenger sent with these tidings; and the others, who seem only to have been heard and not seen by the shepherds, were attendants upon him, who, in the fervour of their zeal, could not forbear their harmonious suffrage on the occasion. The light also that attended him, may have been either individually the same which the wise men saw, and is in that history called a star: or only in general, like that, a ray and portion of that majestic light in which God dwells, and which clothes not only himself, but even his messengers as a garment. But I will insist only on his words: which are these, "Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

The angel here informs the shepherds first of all,

that the message he brings is of such a nature, as to be matter of joy. Then he proceeds, in the next verse, to show them what it is: "Unto you is born, this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." Had he only told them, that Christ the Lord was born, they, from the character which the prophets had given of that person, could not have been ignorant what sentiments of heart were due to the news of his appearance: yet, to help their apprehensions, and secure their joy the better, he adds that very title which must ultimately be the ground of their joy, and calls him a Saviour: "Unto you is born a Saviour." But now, if the great motive to joy is couched in this title Saviour, this directs us to look farther than the nativity, or to look upon that only as the opening of a large and manifold scene of wisdom and love in the redemption of mankind: for Christ was not a Saviour to us merely by being born, but by several steps besides, which he took afterwards. Hence, I think, I am authorized to understand the subject of joy here mentioned, to be in effect the Christian salvation itself, with what was done to purchase it, and the happy fruits of it; or, which will come to the same, the gospel or doctrine wherein all these things are promulged. Accordingly at present, I shall take the words before us, "Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people," as containing this position, That the Christian doctrine was intended to be (and moreover was, at the first preaching of it,) received with joy. This observation I will

I. Confirm from the Scripture.

II. Inquire, What it was in the Christian doctrine which must more particularly be the cause of this joy.

III. Draw some inferences.

I. That the Christian doctrine was intended to be received with joy.

If the words I have read, because they were spoken upon a particular occasion, may not seem so directly to imply this, the thing however will be put beyond all doubt by other places of Scripture. And first, it is somewhat remarkably to our purpose, that the very terms εὐαγγέλιον and εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, are used in such a manner in the apostolical writings. Three times in four that there is occasion to mention the Christian doctrine, or the proclaiming of it to the world, it is done by these words; which yet in themselves were not so very obvious, nor, so far as appears, any favourite phrases of the age. No reason can be given for it, but that the truth of the case so much required, that the doctrine then delivered should be looked upon both as news and good news; and be received, as in nature and common life good news or tidings are received, which, we know, is with the most sensible joy, and therefore, those who paint the passions strong take the persons they represent, at the moment when some concerning event comes first to their know-

ledge: I say this was so much the most suitable reception of any for our Saviour's religion, that to ensure it, no repetition of the same word was thought too much. Agreeable hereto St. Paul, in a place where he is very careful to remove wrong, and suggest right notions of that matter, gives this character of his office as a preacher of Christianity, "We are helpers of your joy." As he does, in another place, apply to himself and his fellow-preachers, those words of the prophet Isaiah, where a bringer of good tidings (and perhaps it was hence the idea flowed into the New Testament) is supposed to raise such joy and transport in the beholders even afar off, that his very person and motion seem to them more amiable than ordinary: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" And, indeed, wherever that prophet speaks of the Christian dispensation, he calls upon those to whom the promise is addressed, to rejoice: "Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people.—Sing, O Heavens, and be joyful, O Earth.—The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light; they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and to him (for so the margin reads it) increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." Now prophecy may be so far like the seeing of things with the eye at a great distance, that it may

take in perhaps no more than the gross of the object, but is sure to do justice to that: and if so, then whatever be the particulars of Christianity, which will upon a nearer inspection be separately regarded, yet that which ought first to strike the eye, that which makes the bulk of it, and, in the prophet's view, swallows up every thing else, is some great consolation or matter of joy.

But to come still closer. Nothing can be a better rule to judge by, than the impressions with which the first converts heard the Christian doctrine: what they felt, ought to be felt in and from Christianity, for it is in them we see the most genuine effects of it. After that great conversion on the day of Pentecost, the outward behaviour of the believers immediately thereupon is described in several particulars; and their state of mind, which indeed showed itself in their actions, is sufficiently intimated in two words, gladness or exultation, and singleness of heart: to which we may add what is said of them before; that, among many others perhaps who were never the better for it, these were the persons who gladly received St. Peter's word, and therefore were baptized. In the same book of the Acts, after mentioning that Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ to them, it is taken notice of, "that there was great joy in that city." When the jailor who had St. Paul in custody, had once heard him speak the word of the Lord, besides the actions he did presently upon believing, which plainly imply an alacrity of heart, and are somewhat parallel to the account of those

converts first mentioned, it is expressly added in the close, that he rejoiced. The like we find in the Ethiopian eunuch; as soon as Philip had preached Jesus unto him, and he was baptized, though his guide was snatched from him, yet the doctrine having sunk into his heart, gave proof there that he received it as good tidings; for he went on his way, it is not said only reasoning, meditating, or the like, but, rejoicing.

Indeed we have reason to think, that all who heard the gospel to any good purpose, heard it with the same sentiments of joy. They behaved at first, like persons quite amazed and surprised with the divine grace and bounty; and all their lives after, whatever the religion of Christ required of them, they abounded in the same with thanksgiving: which habitual thanksgiving, so often recommended to Christians by St. Paul, may be looked upon still as the convert's joy, now more stayed and mature. And therefore, in our Saviour's parable of the sower, when the hearers compared to stony ground, are said to "receive the word with joy," we are not to take it, as if he insinuated some forwardness in them more than was convenient, or that their beginning was such that it was not likely that they would hold on; but rather just the contrary. He means, that they promised very well as yet, and were disposed towards the gospel, as all good converts usually were disposed. I will add but one place more, of many that I might; because it not only proves that the hearing of the gospel was in those days attended with joy, but puts us in mind of something, whereby we may measure the greatness of that joy; it triumphed over all afflic-

tions. And indeed we may observe in church history, that proselytes the very day they first believed, and "tasted the good word of God," when consequently nothing of habit or improvement could be supposed, but only the pure joy of that Word to support them, were as much raised above this world, and as fit for martyrdom, as at any time after. But to return, St. Paul's words are these, "Ye became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost." This joy of the Thessalonians upon the first hearing of the Word, this cheerfulness and nobleness of spirit, as it did justice to the nature and incomparable worth of the gospel, so it gave an example to all the churches round them: and so excellently right was their behaviour at that time, that it is with a particular pleasure the apostle reflects upon "What manner of entering in he had unto them; and how they," let us carry with us the idea of that young joy, gratitude and zeal, "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

This may suffice to show, that the Christian doctrine was intended to be received with joy; or that joy is the affection or state of mind, which the Christian revelation was expected to produce. Nay more than this hath been shown; it appears that thus it was in fact: in the first times, all who heard the gospel and believed it, did demonstrate thereupon a noble and uncommon gladness of heart. I proceed now,

II. To inquire, What it was in the Christian doctrine, which must more particularly be the cause of this joy?

This discovery will not be without its use, nor will it be very difficult: for we shall have good ground to proceed upon, I mean the plain well-known sentiments of human nature. Every thing will not produce every thing: and we know very well, what kind of events or proposals will create sadness; what will create joy and transport; what will create only a lower sort of complacence, or some employment of the thoughts with little or no emotion at all. The subject, as I consider it, will admit only of such arguing, (and perhaps after all there is none more just and satisfying) as supports itself by a constant appeal to the sensations of our own breast. We must put ourselves in the place of those primitive converts, and then try what part of the Christian doctrine would have been capable, or would not have been capable, to affect us in the manner that they were affected.

And first, I think I may venture to say, That what was thus prophesied of before, and proposed when the time came, as glad tidings; what was accordingly received by these persons with such demonstrations of joy; could not be, principally or properly, a lecture of ethics, a fine set of moral precepts. For in the first place, if this were the case, how could the grand blessing of Christianity be introduced in such a solemn manner, as something entirely new, and unknown to mankind till then; something that improved their condition, like step-

ping at once "out of darkness into a marvellous light?" And how could the impression it made, be an impression of surprise, such as sudden joy supposes? Whereas it is certain that moral rules, and fine sayings of that sort, were not wanting to the world before: those who profess to admire them chiefly in the New Testament, must own they met with them likewise in authors that lived before Christianity; and that with such strength and delicacy, that upon those authors they formed the taste, for gratifying which they value these parts of the New Testament. It is true, some great rules of human life are discovered and adjusted in the gospel, to a perfection not before understood: but upon the whole, what is additional and new of this kind, in our Saviour's religion, was really too little, to be of itself the adequate cause of the joy required and shown in embracing that religion.

I mean, it was so, had good rules and laws been ever so much a probable subject of joy to mankind: but what if they were not? The proper expression for what we feel in reading a well-written treatise of morals, is, that we are pleased; it is an entertainment of the understanding: but then we are said to be in joy, when we perceive some more solid and real accession to happiness. And if the very word joy will not suit with the impressions we receive from the writings of Tully and Aristotle, much less can they, or any better thing as supposed of the same nature with them, elevate the soul so high, as is implied in the behaviour of the first converts, who "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, had

all things common, and counted not their lives dear unto them, so they might finish their course with" the same "joy." I am almost ashamed to push the absurdity any farther, of thinking it possible that the mere perceptive moral part, could be those glad tidings, which deserved and occasioned so much rejoicing: yet to render it still more inconsistent, it must be considered, who those primitive converts were? Not persons of a contemplative disposition, or philosophical education; not men capable of forming, and falling in love with abstract ideas of virtue, order and decorum: but plain people, who had no refined way of thinking, but which is much better, a tender and faithful conscience. It could never enter into their minds to make virtue a theory, or to enjoy it in the same manner as prospects and plans, or the relations of lines and superfices; nor could they be in raptures for any new discovery in this way. No, their concern about virtue and duty was quite of another nature; they knew they had transgressed the plain rules of it, and were in danger of God's displeasure: so much as they already understood, condemned them: small matter of joy therefore would it have been to them, that the law was now raised to a still more spiritual sense, and to greater perfection. Had this been all, or even the chief thing that they were encouraged to apprehend, nay had not this enforcement of the law been placed as it were in the rear of some previous and seasonable mercies, the greatness and influence of which made every thing else delightful and feasible; instead of any joy of theirs, we should rather have read of the deepest despair, confusion and distress.

It seems, therefore, pretty plain, that however the precepts and laws of the gospel are the part which some men affect chiefly to admire, yet the first proselytes could not directly and nakedly rejoice in these, but must owe their joy to something else first. But that, you will say, may be presumed to have been the declaration of the certainty, in general, of a future state of rewards and punishments. But neither will this appear a sufficiently probable cause of such surprise, and such joy. The apostles had indeed some new proofs, as well as juster notions to give of a life to come; but still it was a thing not unheard of even to the Gentiles; and to the Jews, of whom chiefly the first converts consisted, it was very familiar, it was what their "twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night," had continual regard to. A future state, therefore, in general, to argue as we did before, could not be the new, the surprising thing: and we may question whether it could be, simply in itself, matter of clear joy. For let us consider the condition of mankind, guilty, as I said just now, and obnoxious to divine wrath: even the heathens had a conscience accusing, or else excusing them inwardly, but we may guess which it did most: and the Jews had besides, a particular strong idea of sin and its demerit, kept up by the use of their sacrifices appointed for that very purpose. Now in this situation: however it might be a great and noble thought, That we are beings of an endless duration, who shall outlast the present constitution of the elements, and see those illustrious scenes which the Creator keeps in reserve; yet as accountable creatures, who must then

stand a trial, they neither could nor ought to look upon these things in an abstract and speculative way, while their personal concern and fate was to be settled. And how well shall we suppose this could possibly be settled, upon the foot of their past life, by the persons we are now speaking of? Surely not better by the most unblemished of them, than very faintly to hope the best: which is far short of joy. Upon the whole, the mere assuring them of a life to come, could only have affected them in much the same manner, as Jacob was affected upon the news of Esau's approach with 400 men with him: here was an object presented to his thoughts, that might be called great and important, but not joyful; for he did not know as yet, whether it was a friend or an enemy that was drawing towards him, but the latter much more likely. So that however the doctrine of a future state be indeed confirmed by the gospel, yet considered absolutely, or as it was an article of natural religion, it could not be those glad tidings which we are in search of. In the order of Christianity, (for sure such an institution may be allowed to have an order of its own) it does indeed make a part of that gracious proposal, which so sensibly rejoiced and comforted the first hearers of it: but yet so, that when it contributed to this joy, a confirmation of the old belief of a future existence at large was the least of the case: it was attended with something much greater, even a merciful, and at present true, though according to their conduct, still alterable determination of that existence to happiness and glory, upon their embracing the gospel. Which determination

also was made, only in consequence of another grace or favour; purely in and under which, therefore, and not from that doctrine itself, it was possible for them to conceive such a prospect of the future state, as should be joyful.

We see, that no branch of the Christian doctrine yet mentioned, can be supposed to have been the thing, that occasioned such joy in such circumstances. Let us at last simply consult those very circumstances, to find out what it should indeed be. Mankind were sinners: what therefore could they so much want, what would they be so glad of, as the forgiveness of sins? They especially of mankind, who chiefly gave ear to our Saviour and his apostles, were known to long for nothing more than such remission, could it be obtained; as indeed he, who knew where the great strength of his religion lay, and how it was capable of administering joy, always invited such to him. We find also, that the main subject of the first discourses of the apostles, those very discourses upon hearing and crediting which, such conversions, and that remarkable joy we took notice of, did presently ensue, was the pardon of sins through Jesus Christ. But we need do no more for ascertaining this matter, than to keep close to the test laid down, and ask, Whether in the nature of human sentiments, creatures guilty and obnoxious to punishment, could, upon any message from the Creator, other than his declared forgiveness of their offences, find themselves in such a condition as to rejoice? Reconciliation, mere reconciliation to the great God, though the consequences of it be

not specified, and much more if they be, may well be tidings of the highest joy to us; but without it, what can? Without this, it is certain the first step is not taken to relieve us; however in it, perhaps all may be done that we need. And as this mercy was of such a kind as to be principally wanted, and most sensibly welcome: so before the preaching of the gospel, not only the Gentiles, but the Jews themselves remained in suspense, shut up unto the enjoyment of this blessing by the faith which should afterwards be revealed; which blessing was therefore kept secret in a great measure from them as to the manner of its accomplishment, until it should be unfolded and satisfactorily explained in the incarnation of the Son of God.

Thus at length we have found out that which made the jailor, the eunuch, and all the first converts to rejoice: which was capable of justifying the title gospel, or good news; which therefore the apostles with such complacence and alacrity conveyed to all the ends of the earth. It was principally, we may be pretty confident, the forgiveness of sins; promised indeed and assured in divers manners under the patriarchal and Jewish dispensations, but really, actually, and in an ample manner granted by the Word's being made flesh, and by what he did and suffered for us under that manifestation. This was the point which alone could, by the very nature of human passions or sentiments, produce that joy, which both in God's design and in the event, was joined with the hearing of the Christian doctrine. I may now go on

III. To draw some inferences more immediately from this last head.

It may perhaps seem not so necessary a matter, to enter upon any comparative consideration of the different parts of our holy religion; or so much as to inquire what is the chief thing in it. But since every institution must in reality have something in it that is principal, more essential and important than the rest; the mind will of itself be searching out for this, and will necessarily confer the honour, and lay the stress upon some particular or other, perhaps such as will least bear it. So that what will of course be done either well or ill, it concerns us to look to it that it be done well. Especially considering the consequence of a mistake in this respect: it makes Christianity quite another thing, and gives it a different colour and complexion throughout. Thus let a man take it for granted, that the divine decrees are what all theology should open with, be deduced from, and used as the clue and rule to every thing else, and what an influence will it have? To refer but to one instance more, and that, the grand error of the times: Some have of late looked upon that inculcation, which is made in the New Testament, of several duties of the law of nature, as the great thing, or business of Christianity: and very consistently herewith, they have not only allowed the whole mystery of our Saviour's mediation with its fruits, but a small and mean place in their scheme; but they have even claimed the very term gospel, which we thought above all words, did

imply some new blessings of Christianity, to this re-promulgation of the moral law; this, say they, is the gospel, and other things are exterior, accidental, and properly no parts of it.

And as a mistake in the relative consideration of the several parts of the Christian doctrine, is of such very ill consequence; so it is also almost the only kind of mistake, which we are liable to fall into. It is scarcely possible for us in the main, either to imagine that some things are contained in the New Testament, which are not so to all, or that others are no ways contained in it, which plainly are: but in deciding between the particulars that do occur there, which of them deserves our first and more especial attention, which of them is the point that was intended to rule, and take in all the rest; here it is that we judge amiss. And we may do so, even when we understand well enough, singly, the several particulars that are touched upon; for it may be still as it were another light, that shows us their due proportion and arrangement. Upon these accounts, I think it a question very fit to be considered of, What is indeed the chief or principal thing in the Christian religion, taking it as a system?

And I am in hopes, that what has now been observed will be of some use towards determining this. For thus we may argue: There was something in the Christian doctrine, which the first hearers apprehended to be the chief and most eminent part of its contents, and this they were suitably affected with: but the sentiment they expressed upon the occasion, was joy, very great joy: now this, as we have shown,

could arise from nothing else, but the remission of sins: therefore remission of sins, was what they took to be the great point in that doctrine. And we cannot doubt, but it was the very chief thing in Christianity, that made, in fact, the greatest impression upon their minds; they must principally have felt, and been struck with that, what in it was principal: otherwise they would not have been affected with that religion, upon the whole, according to the true state of it; and the apostles likewise ought to have corrected them, if they had not taken proportionable notice of the main particular in their doctrine, or had regarded and been touched with any thing else more than that. Thus for instance, had the raising of the precepts of the gospel to great perfection and exactness been the purpose which God principally designed to accomplish in sending his Son into the world; but the mercy, grace, and favour of that covenant been very small and narrow, as designed to have only an incidental place in the system, and barely to serve under the former: in this case, I say the apostles would not have suffered their hearers to run so much into joy; for care and fear would then, from the very first, have been the proper tempers. But since they and God also himself, did encourage joy in the embracing of Christianity, though tempered afterwards with care and fear; we may depend upon it, that though the precepts too are included in their right place, yet mercy and favour, in one word, forgiveness is that which is uppermost, and gives laws and being to every thing else in the Christian scheme.

How advantageous a turn, character, and constitution it will give to the whole frame of Christianity, to make remission of sins the principal thing, may be expected here to be shown, since that has been recommended in the room of all other leading ideas. Now this I can do no better, and need do no farther, than simply by saying: That hereby our holy religion will prove itself more emphatically a covenant of grace; and surely there is something in grace, bounty or free love, that is particularly worthy of God, and fitted to make very deep and noble impressions on the igenuous part of our nature. This indeed is but speaking in general: but no more is required of me in the present argument. I am not obliged to account for the whole subsequent order and structure of the Christian scheme: it may naturally be presumed, that every thing will follow in the very best order, when the foundation or leading notion is once rightly laid. If we are deceived after this, and still take up with something wide of true Christianity, as some may possibly have done, it must be by running away too hastily and crudely with that first principle, applying it with some strange corruption of heart; or at least not waiting, with due patience and impartiality, at the gate of Scripture and experience, till the genuine system of things, with all desirable adjustment and connection, does open and discoyer itself, after its own way of consequence from the same principle. But, as I said, I am not obliged now to look so far: I am only inquiring, what is, however, the chief thing in the Christian doctrine: and from one reason, the kind

of affection that doctrine was designed to raise, and did raise in its first proselytes, by means of its chief subject, I have concluded it to be remission of sins. To render it still more probable, that this is indeed the point on which all turns, I will further add a few other considerations, and then conclude.

And, in the first place, let us reflect on what was hinted before, concerning the discourses of the apostles in the book of Acts, what great regard there is had to the preaching of forgiveness. They apply themselves indeed sometimes to convince their hearers of sin; and more still to set forth the evidence both from the actions of our Lord's life, and from his resurrection, that he was an authorized and sufficient Saviour; but one may see that the result of all, is to notify and proclaim the salvation itself, the forgiveness of sins. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive also the gift of the Holy Ghost," is the close of one sermon. Another ends thus, "To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins." Another leaves this upon the hearers' minds, "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Nay, they themselves declare this to be the proper business, and great trust of their apostleship: "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath

given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath (it is said again) committed unto us the word of reconciliation."

In the next place, let it be remembered, what an idea the Scripture gives us of sin. Very different from that of our moral writers, who consider sin on man's part as a transient act, that has no subsistence within us farther than in and by our explicit commissions of it; and on God's part, as a thing very easily overlooked and forgiven by his infinite goodness. Whereas the Scripture makes it to be a permanent state, a manner of existence, and calls it spiritual death: and what that is, who can say? or how much, and how great things, a deliverance from this death by forgiveness, may imply and draw after it? And then as to God's forgiving of sin, we may observe, there is great difficulty made of it. It is the only thing that He, who does whatever he pleases with ease, is represented as finding but with much ado how to accomplish, and put to use expedients: but when once this is done, every other good gift flows from him without any farther deliberation or labour. Thus I am sure we are led to think, particularly by the doctrine of mediation; and who can say, there was no deeper cause of things appearing thus, than that they might so appear to us?

Again, let it be considered, That future salvation itself, and all the graces of the Christian life, are acknowledged to be virtually contained in, and owing to, the forgiveness of sins and the adoption that at-

tends it: all the displays of God's love to us, and his sanctifying Spirit in us ever after, are but continuation or unfolding of that first blessi Thus I say it is granted to be, when baptism,* channel of remission, is acknowledged, as it alway qualification enough for heaven, to those who upon it. The reason is, because as sin is no o than our whole natural condition; so the remis of it is supposed to admit us at once, to what spiritual or eternal advantages do compose the state of Christianity: as a man is completely a m ber of another world, upon his soul's being lo from the body. We do not indeed know so tainly except in the case of baptism, when a m sins are forgiven; but, if we did, we should alv pronounce of him, that then he enjoyed all the ness of God's love, and Christ's redemption. what is said of the divine kindness, as ordain such means of remission, is no less true of it as plying the remission itself: "He that spared his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," who thereby hath forgiven us, "how shall he with him," and with forgiveness once granted, "f ly give us all things?—Whom he justified," or gave, "them he also glorified." We are apt to th that therefore in effect God forgives us, that we

* By baptism here is not meant that external rite by w persons are admitted members of the visible church, but change of heart which is effected by the regeneration of the Spirit, or, as it is expressed by the apostle, "The like fi whereunto even baptism doth now save us, not the putting a of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience ward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." ED.

serve him in holiness for the future: but though this hath its truth, yet the order of things here supposed, sometimes, we see, plainly fails, as in persons dying presently after baptism; and it is universally more just to say, That for this reason God enables us to live in holiness, because he before hath so loved us, as to forgive and receive us for his children. In forgiving us, therefore, God includes every thing else that can be done for us, whether it pertain to the life of glory, or the life of grace: and as to the latter, if our time be prolonged in this world, that we may become subjects of it, perhaps all he need do, is but to seal and discover more and more to our hearts this fundamental mercy we have obtained, the pardon of sin: the love and gratitude arising from hence by the operation of the Holy Spirit, being indeed our whole sanctification or new life in its principle, which is only enlarged by various ways and occasions of expressing this affection.

I will add but one consideration more, though the greatest of any: It was to purchase remission of sins, that the Son of God did offer himself upon the cross, did suffer death. His whole incarnate economy throughout, was the most wonderful of all the divine counsels and undertakings: and the most important step of that economy, which he himself speaks so much of beforehand, and on which his apostles make our salvation more peculiarly to depend and follow, was directly addressed to the procuring of this benefit: which benefit, therefore, may be presumed to hold the same rank among the advantages of redemption, as its cause, the death of

Christ, did among the means. But why do I argue from the momentous appearance of that great event, our Saviour's death, to the importance of that which was purchased by it, remission of sins; when the persons I have all along been opposing, are as far from owning the one as the other? As God's forgiveness is with them a little thing, that has nothing more extraordinary in it than that has which is the sole measure of it, our own bare sorrow for our faults and better practice afterwards: so the death of Jesus Christ is looked upon by them as a thing at most only symbolical, popularly applied for our moral instruction, notwithstanding all the expressions which ascribe a true and real efficacy to it. But then should not this oblige us, who believe higher things of the sacrifice of Christ's death, to find out some very worthy and adequate use, office, and exertion for that sacrifice; or in other words, to regard that, wherein it is generally confessed to be exerted, as a more considerable point in the frame of Christianity, and which may more justly be supposed to involve and modify all the rest than we should otherwise imagine? My reason for it is this, The effect and cause must be proportionable to each other, and our opinion of both must rise and fall together. It was a reservedness among divines at one time, with regard to the effects of our Saviour's death and atonement, such as justification by faith only, and peace of heart thereupon: whereby in the issue, though not in their intention, they discouraged, together with what was weak or wicked, all zeal or frequency of expression on those

ubjects; this, I say, gave occasion to some at ength, to treat his death itself as what might almost s well have been spared: from whence we may earn, how we must proceed, if we would effectually efend the doctrine of our Saviour's atonement: we nust assert and maintain, that very great things ave been done by that atonement, some very real nd weighty benefit obtained thereby to those that elieve. Otherwise, to say high things of our Sa-iour's performance, and not at the same time to be eady to show, since that must naturally be expected, n how truly high and important a respect we are ctually the better for it, will be a fatal inconsistency.

What must follow from the whole, by way of onclusion or application, is obvious; and I will ive it in short.

That we should not affect to bring down revealed eligion, to the measures of natural religion; nor ven take it for granted, that that always most de-erves our care, esteem and regard in the former, hich is common to it with the latter. Indeed a articular earnestness on this side has been expedi-nt, and may be again, when any excesses of mis-nformed zealots shall pervert the plain rules of good nd evil: but otherwise, and in general, it is certain, hat whatever things there are in our religion, which re parts of the common religion of reason or nature, an never be lost or suppressed: but what it has of its own, may, and is naturally in danger so to be. Rather, therefore, if the Gospel does contain any thing peculiar, let us resolve to try what salutary

virtue there may be in this peculiarity; for certainly it was not added in vain.

Particularly, Let us look well into the mediatorial scheme; in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And since remission of sins is represented, as the more special and eminent blessing derived to us from the Mediator; let us see, if we are duly acquainted with its great value, power and extent. The most desirable proof of which will be, if we, like the ancient believers, enjoy an inward peace and confidence towards God in the sense of that remission; a peace, as they describe it, which passes all understanding.

But if this may seem too particular and confined, let us, in some part or respect, or other, (though none, I think, will be found capable of this effect, but the doctrine of remission) be filled however, by the word of the gospel, with a divine joy in believing: a joy, whose praise and value in the course of our lives, will not so much be, that it can sometimes prove its greatness by raptures and transports, as that it implies, when there appears less of these, a clear, strong and uniform kind of consciousness notwithstanding, of our being unspeakably happy through the grace of the gospel, and redeemed from the manifold miseries of a sinful state. To feel more or less this effect in general, I mean joy, is plainly incumbent on us, if the gospel be the same now, as it was in the beginning; and if we also are to be moved and to act by the real and proper principles of Christianity; for I speak nothing here of such religion,

oblation and virtue, as subsists upon other reasons and views. If, therefore, we are sensible of no such impressions from the New Testament, but can read or hear it with the same coolness and indifference as a piece of philosophy; I do not know how we can prove to ourselves, that we apprehend it, I do not say worthily, but even so much as in the right sense; for the right sense and view, seems to be connected with great joy: the thing itself is of such a nature, "Behold," says the angel, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." And yet I appeal to experience, whether this be not a very common case, to be able to read the New Testament with approbation more or less of the judgment and understanding; nay, perhaps with reverent impressions of heart, with some concern and devotion; and yet not properly with joy, but rather a secret uneasiness and dejection. Nor do I see how a sincere person, when he reflects upon this, can do otherwise than wonder, what should be the cause of it: why the gospel, which was conceived to be so comfortable a thing at the first preaching of it, should be to him heavy and foreign in some parts of it, painful and discouraging in others, and upon the whole affording more of check than comfort? The true cause certainly lies here: That Christianity was intended to be, and accordingly was understood by the first hearers of it, under a different turn and view; and with such an order within itself, as made it appear to them a dispensation still fuller of a marvellous and effectual kindness, bounty and condescension, than it commonly does to us.

Could we conceive things in this true state, and genuine connexion of them, whatever that, in the whole of it, be, we may well suppose, there would be no need of those jealousies and suspicions, which usually and with some reason arise in us, when grace or faith, when joy or feeling are mentioned. Salvation by grace would then be perfectly rational, sure of the best effects, and self-guarded from all abuses. Indeed, why should we be afraid to have our obedience flow more immediately from gratitude: while at the same time, and by the same gospel, the obligations of hope and fear lie upon us too, and are in as full force as ever? Gratitude is a very strong principle, such as carries with it a readiness and diligence in the performance of our whole duty: and if the mercy we are thankful for, be no less than such a state of salvation and acceptance with God already, that we can pray for nothing more, and intend nothing more by our good actions, than to "continue the same unto our life's end," (which indeed we shall by no means do, without the practice of all good actions) our obedience will be generous, and as near as need be to disinterested. And if it was in and under the remission of sins, that we were admitted to all this, and therefore the character of pardoned sinners is to be a standing one, and the affections that belong to it, perpetual in us; this will, above all things, preserve us in such a humility, as cannot otherwise be so much as conceived. To say nothing of what one may call, in a particular manner, our love of Christ; which St. Peter seems to speak of: I mean, that he being the author of all

his grace to us, and therefore the object of such continual reliance, contemplation, and remembrance, this must needs create in us a kind of personal affection towards him our great benefactor, such as will again render all our service of, and regards to him in a Christian life, the more sensible and lively. So innocent, and free from any but good tendencies, is that tenor and state of things between God and us, implied by grace. As innocent is that temper of mind, for which we are forced to use words, which might seem to make it a mere heat, or business of passion: but the joy we mean, is in truth such, that it can have no wild or improper consequences. For whatever degree of it a believer thus feels upon a right apprehension of things, it will never raise him above prudence and sobriety, above civil duty or decency, but only above vice and all that is base and unworthy: nor will it be to him instead of a good life, but a most powerful instrument to assist him in such a life. In short, it will be as widely distinguished from enthusiasm in its fruits, as it was in its rise; for this latter always errs against the plan and balance of Christianity, before it commits other errors. To conclude, to rejoice rightly, with a confidence and a lowliness of mind entirely reconcilable, is indeed a great thing: whether we derive the occasion of it from the terms of that salvation, which in the event was purchased for us; or whether we call to mind the more immediate intention of my text, as well as the duty of this season, by acknowledging, in an especial manner, that Fountain of so many mercies, and dawn of joy to poor mankind,

the Word's being made flesh, and being born of a virgin; whereby he both honoured and saved our frail nature which he assumed, and blessed us with his presence, by tabernacling among us.

The Reasonableness and Extent of Religious Reverence:

A SERMON.*

PSALM CXIV. 7.

Tremble thou earth, at the presence of the Lord!

THESE words follow after a repetition of the solemn circumstances, which accompanied the passage of the Israelites out of Egypt, and the giving of the law at mount Sinai.

They may be construed either as a epiphonema of the Psalmist addressed to the material earth; and answering his own questions just before, "What ailed thee, O thou sea?—ye mountains!—ye hills!" as if he had said, "Thy shaking so remarkably at that time, O earth, may indeed well be accounted for; it was at the presence of the Lord; his hand was there." And thus they contain an assertion,

* Preached at the Brethren's Chapel, in Fetter-Lane, London, on the Fast-Day, February 6th, 1756.

who is author of earthquakes and other interesting phenomena here below. Or else they may be taken as an exhortation to us, the inhabitants of the earth: "Since the Lord is so great in power, and in all respects so excellent; let a holy shuddering, at least a becoming awe, come over your spirits, O men, when ye consider with whom ye have to do." And thus they will inculcate a frame of mind so very necessary, that the absence or decay thereof happening in any age, must indicate, worse than all other totterings, that "the foundations of the earth are out of course."

We will take the text in both senses.

I. As an address to the material earth.

So construed, the words will assert, That God is the proper author of earthquakes and such like important phenomena. What they directly affirm, is indeed no more than this, that one grand shaking of the earth was to be ascribed to Him: that, I say, at the opening of their dispensation, the Jews could remember at mount Sinai a trembling and concussion of the solid mass, which was undeniably preternatural and divine. Nor is it unworthy of notice, that the Christian dispensation, even in this kind, was ushered in with an equal solemnity: for the shock was repeated at mount Calvary, "the earth then did quake, and the rocks rent."

Here it may be replied, "What inference would you draw? these were always looked upon as single and uncommon instances; they were miracles." This is readily allowed; but we affirm, they were

such single instances, as, by their peculiar evidence, were intended to serve for a key to a thousand others less clear: such uncommon events, as were designed to explain what is called the common course of things. For of miracles in general, and particularly those in the history of Exodus, it has been very justly remarked, that they were calculated on purpose to claim unto God that continual and regular agency, which he has in the elementary motions and sublunary events; and which, because it doth happen daily, and proceeds in a gentle and, if I may so say, modest manner, is apt, without such rousing vindications, to be argued quite away by atheists.

For, however common it is on the tongue, atheism it must ever be to dare to term any effect or occurrence natural, with the intention to deny thereby that it is divine, or to exclude God entirely out of it. Which is, at the same time, most extremely absurd: for must not the great Architect necessarily preside still over and direct every wheel of his own machine? "He doth," if we will believe the Scripture, "whatsoever pleaseth him, in heaven and in earth, and in the sea, and in all deep places." He gives corn, and wine, and oil. It is he also that sends famine, sword, pestilence; and determines the operations of these his messengers. One time (says the Bible) an epidemic distemper raged; and that no man hereafter, on such occasions, might look alone to noxious qualities in the air, or the like, the veil was for once drawn aside, and presented to open view the destroying Angel of the most High. This is the Scripture account of occurrences here below.

Neither let any reasoner flatter himself, that this is a system only for those who believe a Bible. It is impossible to conceive any religion at all, even exclusive of revelation; that is, in other words, to conceive any trust, comfortable resignation, repentance, or gratitude towards the Deity, adapted to the successive scenes of human life; upon any other foundation. For what a dreary void are we left in, what a sullen and total suspense of all those sweetest emotions of the soul towards its Maker, (which are to it, what respiration or drawing breath is to the body) the moment the least exception is but imagined from the general rule, that "the finger of God is in all things!" As, on the one hand, with respect to such an excepted instance, there would be no intelligent and gracious being for us properly to honour, love, and trust in, to supplicate or thank, in that event: so, on the other, if but some things, were they ever so few, did thus come to pass without Him, more might; and then, to make short work, why not all? and so we are without God in the world.

If any one could warrant, that this melancholy issue in practice shall not follow, and if we could be assured that the Almighty shall every where be acknowledged as concerned in some manner or other; be it as acting by a pure immediate power, or, for purposes of favour or chastisement, overruling the already settled causes, restraining secretly here, impelling and guiding the aim there, though sometimes perhaps barely approving the spontaneous course, we might with more patience suffer men to abound each

iis own philosophy, to delineate the mechanical
and process of earthquakes, as they trace up
ry other accident, turn or emergence, to some
enious if not true spring. For, as to the result,
h of the above-mentioned suppositions are much
same. Although we must declare, that the
rtest, and withal most wholesome way of think-
, will always be, with the wise vulgar, without
nement or inquiring how? simply to say, " All
ngs are God's doing!"

It is through this glass a faithful Jew or Chris-
n views all that happens in the world. The Jew
st think the same of every subsequent earthquake,
of that at mount Sinai; namely, that the earth
:h time trembles at the presence of the Lord: and
e Christian cannot but think, not only that the
ncussion during the scene on mount Calvary had
sacred reference to his incarnate suffering God,
being a reproof to the world for its insensibility
the great evil of sin, and of the awful though
acious price then paid for its remission; but that
ery solemn warning of the like kind since, comes
)m the same hand, and has some, yea and the very
me meaning. And then an impartial self-exami-
tion will presently follow, together with all the
se and happy fruits of such exercise of heart.

But this leads to the

II. Sense, wherein the words may be taken:
mely, as an exhortation to us, the inhabitants of
ie earth, to tremble, in heart and spirit, before the
ord.

The present juncture is a season, when this frame of soul, and indeed a particular earnestness therein, has been recommended to us moreover by the highest human authority; as it had, surely, been called for loudly enough by our late and present circumstances. First an earthquake, (which, we have shown, is always to be looked upon as coming from God's own hand) an earthquake, unusual in its extent, and in some appendages of its shock, so that it put us in mind of that time, when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" a concussion, which only gently shaking our land in some parts, had wrought its devastation however in a realm at no great distance: this, I say, lately happening, solemnly called upon us, both to thank our good God for his merciful reprieve, and to implore his farther long-suffering, yea his entire forgiveness of our offences; and that, at the same time, his converting and reforming grace might duly qualify us to obtain this.

As urgent a call, for humble and serious application to the throne of grace, is the war we are in prospect of. This is also a scourge of God, the supreme management of which he reserves in his own hands, leaving it but in part to be wielded by men. To be forced to recur to this sharp means, for a nation sometimes cannot avoid it, is always unpleasant: and to try to remove first, by true repentance, whatever might possibly become a curse or impediment to our endeavours, is much more expedient and becoming, than gay, boastful and presumptuous expressions. It is no impeachment to our courage,

along with military preparations, to make inquiry how we stand in our covenant towards God. This, therefore, we are by authority admonished to do on this day; to confess our manifold sins and demerits; to entreat the Lord, that he would here notwithstanding espouse our just cause, put a stop to the invasions of our enemies, and secure and protect his Majesty's realms and dominions, and the lives and properties of his subjects.

The greatest part, if not all, in this place assembled, are, I hope, not now to learn or acquire a deep and serious respect for the Divine Being; as they are also not now to begin feeling a good-will and sympathy for their country: the state of mind is already habitual to them. And so neither my text, nor the enjoined meditations of the day, can have any new or unaccustomed operation in their case. Though both will suggest to them an employment, for that very reason, the more welcome. These must, (because they so well can, because their heart teaches them no other lesson) sincerely observe this day in conjunction with all their fellow-subjects: they must feel the distress, lay to heart the interest, and concur in the supplications of the land they live in; they must spend the day, as, I make no douht, they have spent the past hours of it, before the Lord, in a spirit of private self-examination and penitence, as well as of public charity, "to the obtaining the pardon of our crying sins, to the averting of his judgments, and for the continuance of his mercy, in the support of the Protestant religion and our liberties, in the prosperity of our country, and in

the welfare of our most gracious sovereign and the royal family."

But it is also to be endeavoured, supposed and hoped, that on this day, in all parts of the nation, many a thoughtless person, scarce ever serious before in his life-time, alarmed by the late and present threatening appearances, may feel an unwonted religious awe come over him; and be, by this occasion at least, brought to his sober senses, to be no more a giddy delinquent from the duty and general spirit of the universe.

I say, the general spirit. For, we must not forget it, an awful impression of God is what alike pervades the insensible earth under our feet, and the most intelligent worshipping Seraph over our head. They both tremble, or stand abashed at the presence of the great God. Shall not we, intermediate beings, do the same? It is, indeed, a state of soul, which, from the tenor of Scripture, and the nature of things, is, when rightly defined, of universal and perpetual obligation: and therefore we will consider it more particularly. But first we will remove what may, now under the New Testament, very well be separated from the idea of the Psalmist and other Old Testament writers on this head—I say, may be so; for in fact there are thousands of minds still, upon whom the Gospel improvement does not take place: and these must be overawed in the way that they, by their spiritual condition, are capable of, until they become susceptible of a better. But if we shall describe how at present it may, yea ought to be,

1. The impression need not, ought not, to be only or chiefly occasioned by divine chastisements. We have indeed shown, that every calamity of the earth is to be considered as God's act, a judgment of his; and therefore there can be no impropriety in learning awe at that school, if a man has not learned it before: yea, in bowing and paying homage so long, when he will perhaps do it no longer. "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." All I would say, is, there are still better, and those permanent reasons, for being in this situation of soul before God.

2. As to its nature, it need not, ought not, to be a servile awe. By servile, we mean such, where a man cannot believe God to be his friend, but apprehends rather that all his motions are motions of enmity and wrath seeking utterly to devour him; and consequently, strives to please him more through necessity than liking. This seems to have been, for the most part, the state of mankind under the Old Testament: and is still the state of those who internally stand on no other bottom. But under the New Testament, where an all-sufficient Sacrifice has been made, and the joyful and real reconciliation of man with God, through the blood of Christ, is laid as the foundation; it must be confessed, that that ancient fear of God is dubiously spoken of, and with not a half-approbation. "There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear,"—are the express words of St. John.

In the mean while, though something in the an-

cient state of mind is manifestly rejected here; it is as certain on the other hand, that some other part of it, or else something analogous thereto, is for ever to continue. There is to be a profound regard, an affectionate and filial fear. And this impression, even supposing the former alarming motives, unexpiated guilt, distrust, and fearful looking for of judgment, to be ever so entirely set aside, may still be, upon very different considerations, so truly overpowering, that it might be called not improperly, in the Psalmist's language, trembling. That word, however, it must be confessed, carries rather a harsh sound; the Apostle furnishes us with another! reverence at least, deep religious reverence, we must still term it; and so we shall term it in the remainder of our discourse: "Let us," saith the epistle to the Hebrews, "have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence."

The too general decay of this religious reverence, is the most threatening and ruinous symptom of our times. Happy should I be, could I contribute, in the least, towards re-establishing it among men! I must however bear my testimony. For a gay negligence about all that can be called worship or piety, and a hardy presumption in theory, have been cherished so long among us, as being, what indeed they are, an effectual purging off of superstition: and the difference between ours and all former ages, is so flagrant and obvious in this particular; that one or another may be in danger of looking upon it as a sign perhaps how much we stand on the shoulders of our forefathers, if it be not seasonably suggested

some times, that it is rather a sign of our being grown pygmies even in point of human sense and understanding.

Let us hear a thinker of older times, the venerable author of the "Whole Duty of Man." "A seventh duty to God, says he, is honour, that is, the paying Him such a reverence and respect, as belongs to so great a Majesty; and this is either inward or outward. The inward, is the exalting him in our hearts, having always the highest and most excellent esteem of Him. The outward, is the manifesting and showing forth that inward; and that is the first general in the whole course of our lives, the living like men that do indeed carry that high esteem of God. But, besides this general way of honouring God, there are many particular acts by which we may honour him, and these acts are divers, according to the several particulars about which they are exercised: For we are to pay this honour not only to himself, but also by a due estimation and account of all those things that nearly relate or belong to him. These are especially six: first, his house; secondly, his revenue or income; thirdly, his day; fourthly, his word; fifthly, his sacraments; and sixthly, his name: and every one of these is to have some degree of our reverence and esteem."

I hope no one will find fault with this description of religious reverence, as if it were too complicated. To honour God, is indeed to honour almost all things. It is, to be struck with veneration for innumerable objects; sometimes for one so small that a thousand eyes overlook it, if it does but connect

with Him; though at the same time setting the greatest at defiance, that is contrary to Him. For the object, as this author well observes it, is not only, though principally, that great and good Being under a kind of what we might call personal consideration; but includes also, out of a reflection that they are his, from or for Him, many transactions past, present, and to come, many outward circumstances, and many notions of the mind. To be more particular: we cannot but take in, along with his amiable Self, the acts and appointments of his providence; especially such more important dealings of his with mankind, as he himself lays the greatest stress upon, and seems to recommend as his masterpiece; any instituted memorials of these important dealings; lastly, those moral sentiments, or rules of thinking and acting, which have been discovered in Him, and which we, more or less, have learned or ought to learn from Him.

All this, put together, makes up that grand picture, which, through all its strokes, must for ever engage our attention. But, which is well to be remarked, this picture must not only like others amuse and please, but command and bind. For it is not some common passive portrait, but a highly living one, before which we rather, and our whole being are passive. It is one that can look at us, yea look us through and through; sufficient to abash and keep us blushing, at our best estate; productive not only of deference and tender fidelity towards our object, with an impatience after nearer approaches to it, but withal of some chagrin always and dissatis-

faction at our own selves, yea a pungent and unfeigned self-contempt.

These are all ingredients in what we call religious reverence: he that questions it, may try whether he can conceive such a thing without including every one of them? And we affirm, man is born to pass his days in this disposition: he was both created and redeemed to feel reverence. Does any one account this obligation a hard lot? There is one, and but one way of evading it! Let him declare at once that he is no thinking being! For, as long as we pretend to think and reflect, there is no excusing ourselves from it. This will appear, if we review, ever so little, the abundant matter for this affection, indispensably arising from the two now-mentioned great works of God, creation and redemption. By occasion of which works, we have indeed learned all that we know of Him; and each of them has also placed man in a certain systematical condition towards God: and consequently, we cannot better range the reverential affections, which man is called to, regarding objects out of all the several classes already hinted, than under these two heads. I will therefore very briefly, instancing but in a few particulars out of many, show, what holy reverence the contemplation of creation, and the contemplation of redemption do inculcate.

1. As soon as we open our eyes upon the natural world, what do we see in general but one majestic temple, full of the invisible mind himself? full of nothing but good and worthy movements and transactions, unless we (for none but we have that fa-

culty) will add trifling, ludicrous, and absur
In this temple, man ought to be the consta
shipper. The creation is sufficiently consi
our days as a subject for scrutiny, for nice
ments and disquisitions; and those perha
intended to induce veneration towards the
but, after all, the best, most extensive, ar
tical veneration is what is occasioned by t
and first face of things, as they present the
to the peasant, or to a child, who has not le
profane, and barely thinks, in the gross,
made all this world! God gave all these go
tures!" The former way produces pa
upon God's art; but this produces solid wo

We laugh perhaps at an old woman, whc
her grand-child, "Don't throw your brea
ground; it is a sin to waste bread!" yet t
oracular saying, fit for the largest morta
standing. Why! will a pert objector say,
then the mighty purchase of a bit of bread
novice! thou supposest the value is only
pence that it commonly costs. But there is
manner of calculating; bread is a creature
prepared by his sun and rain, blessed by
human use, and has something so peculiar
mediately divine in it, that should it fail, m
never create any succedaneum that should
in its kind. And so it is with many other

Nothing more justly keeps man in a
awe, than the inscrutability of his own so
nature, capacities, and manner of acting.
and feeble bird, that accidentally has ha

eagle's egg, and is afterwards affrighted at the strength and impetuous tendency of what has been fostered under its own wings, cannot find itself in a more critical case, than a man, when holding dialogue, like Adrian, with his own soul. He perhaps hath been an indolent unmeaning thing; but that immortal part within him, carries a keener edge than has ever yet been unsheathed: and how this edge is likely to be employed in a long hereafter, he has but either bad omens of, or at least must be in a trembling suspense, till grace gives a competent determination. But why do we talk of the soul; we cannot call our very body our own: we cannot add one cubit unto our stature, or make one hair white or black.

Besides this wondrous system of nerves and muscles, which each of us bears about him, there is another body, which is also fearfully and wonderfully made: and that is, the body-politic. This is likewise God's structure, wisely framed and put together; and we may justly apply to it, what is said of a still more peculiar economy. "Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken." How should, therefore, every new guest that treads the stage of human life wish that he may weaken, displace, or ruffle nothing! No ways hurt the wholesome order and coherence of society; but by his services and good example in his generation, rather promote its welfare! For looks he at the whole? It is God's benign scheme. Looks he at any individual? let it be even some poor and contemptible

one, whom in an hour of passion he mig
tempted to injure and trample upon. Such
is, as well as himself, the workmanship of
has a body alike noble, a conscious soul alike t
and sensible of all treatment that happens to it
at least alike, perhaps much more, entitled t
and honourable treatment.

These are some of the sentiments which cr
inspires us with. But does not redemption,
new creation, overthrow them again? Many
wise men have been jealous of this; have, fro
theological scheme of redemption, been appreh
of no other fruits, but haughty self-flattery,
liberties, a destruction of the balance of thin
at least of that of the mind. But herein they
not been quite wise enough; they have shown
they did not understand what they judged of.

2. Redemption heightens all the foregoing.

What it first of all turns our eyes upon,
person of our Redeemer. When we learn,
God, the very maker of heaven and earth, in
passion to us fallen and wretched creatures,
did no more answer the law of our creation) a
make propitiation for our sins, came down, conv
suffered and died as a real meek man in this w
that by the merit of this act we might be everlas
relieved, pardoned and exalted to greater priv
than we had lost: what must be the effect, b
overwhelming admiration, an agony of inse
gratitude, and prostration of our spirit in the
before our Benefactor? Can a human heart,
this, ever any more find the way to its former

ness and indolence? though it may, and does, to a divine peace! Would not the first be too great an incongruity? for can we, in reason, to all eternity recover ourselves out of the astonishment we were thrown into by the sight of the danger we have escaped, and by the sight of this unparalleled generosity of the Deity?—Which is indeed, that above intimated latest manifestation of his, never to be out-done; and on which, among all divine actions, He himself lays the greatest stress.

I have hinted that redemption is not only a rescue from perdition; though that is saying a great deal, especially when we add, "through the incarnation and sufferings of God." But it admits us moreover to privileges entirely new; to adoption with the Father of Jesus Christ; espousals with God the Son; fellowship and tutelage of the Holy Spirit; a right to the ministry of angels, and many more. Now here surely we, sons of the earth, may be allowed to be as much at a loss, as much abashed and confounded, amidst such a theatre of glories, well-described in the xii. chapter of the Hebrews; "But ye are come unto mount Sion," &c. as some raw peasant, when suddenly transported into a king's presence-chamber. And lest any one should think, the awe will wear off at least by custom; the nature of these privileges is such, that different parts or instances of them, or fresh worth in each, is continually turning up, meeting our observation, and renewing the surprise.

If the contemplation of redemption itself, as mere matter of enjoyment, weighs us down; it is no won-

der, that a reasonable concern how to walk henceforth suitably to it, does the same. Our Lord's sacred form, as wounded and bleeding for us, wholesomely haunts us all our lives long: Can this, even according to common sense, be any other than a death's-head to all corrupt joy, to all luxuriances of spirit, whether gross or subtile, that might be supposed remaining? As, on the other hand, it is a daily-cherishing Sun, and like the former and latter rain, to the new nature. Which nature, whether you will conceive it grown up, is never levity, but wisdom, and power, and a sound mind; or whether you will conceive it as young and struggling to grow, is then mingled yet plainer with pain and humility.

The new nature and soundness is partly indeed an immediate fruit of this reflection, "I am pardoned! I, through the immense labour of my surety, am translated into a new condition!" For, thinks the soul—"I see then that the former condition must have been, in the eyes of my Deliverer, some kind of death and putrefaction to my true life, some madness or enchantment to my better intellect: What should therefore be my manner of thinking and acting for the future?"—"Why! just the reverse of the former: he that has learned to know sickness, has withal some notion what health must be." But chiefly and more fully, it is derived from, and nourished by, the understanding a pardoned sinner is endowed with of the mind, will, sentiments, and example of his Saviour on all occasions. An understanding, which he cannot but thirst after, considering he is now so closely allied to that Holy One;

and, for the same reason, cannot but have sufficient opportunities to acquire it. For not only His imitable perfections shine forth in some measure in the creation; not only his written volume lies unsealed henceforth before us; but his very human soul converses with ours, and he bestows at present by his Spirit a regular education upon us, tending to build us up into his lovely image. Now if there are thus manifold rules, sentiments and principles; and these so precious, and grounded in our Lord's own heart and nature; to be by us investigated, gleaned up, practised in our life and conversation, and turned by all possible concoction into our very juices; none can imagine this to be done without a certain trepidation of spirit through zeal and high regard, a quivering (as I may so say) of every limb, partly from modest solicitude, partly from the same cause as it happens to the war-horse when he "swallows the ground." O when shall I attain, when shall I show forth the whole mind of Christ!

As we are surrounded with beauteous mental images, with written precepts of a welcome, but not therefore less sacred, obligation; for surely a friend's mind, when he has something to do or observe for his friend's sake, can no more be heedless or unbent than a slave's, though it be in a different way; so, as Christians, we are encompassed likewise with outward memorials, that are continually to put us in mind of that, which so above all things bows down the believer with gratitude and shame. Besides the Scriptures themselves, which, in whatever part almost we open them, testify of and refer to the death of

our God, and our amazing and expensive redemption; the very institution of a Christian church, and not only the best times thereof, but the bare existence of such a society, holds forth the same. The church is through every age, a pillar, a monument, as much sepulchral as triumphal, of that great fact. Which is inculcated still more palpably by the sacraments; yea presupposed, at least, in every act of our religious worship. So that if the prophet speaks once of a lover of mankind, who was "wounded in the house of his friends:" we Christians are as if we always dwelt in the very chamber, where that affecting scene was transacted. The marks of it are to be seen fresh on every wall; we eat even all our passovers of thanksgiving, joined with that bitter herb, the remembrance of the agonies whereby our peace and safety was purchased. And if the frequent ecclesiastical repetition of this knell cannot now be said to be shocking to us, in the common sense of the word, after we are once reconciled through the light of faith, to our Lord's death: any more than a passing-bell is shocking to one who is reconciled to his own death: yet exceeding reverential however, tender and deeply serious, its effect upon us, be we ever so familiarized and accustomed to it, must still be.

But, in order to be breathed upon by a solemn and sacred air like that of a temple, we need not go so far as instituted commemorations or consecrated places: we have it nearer home. Our own bodies are "temples of the Holy Ghost." If therefore St. Paul makes it so arduous a matter for young Timothy, to know "how he ought to behave him-

self in the house of God;" if, of old, priests were tied to numberless rules, observances and cautions in their ministration: let none now put this away from himself to the sacerdotal order. For each regenerate man is a priest; and the temple which he is to keep in purity, and towards which he is to observe a more exquisite uninterrupted decorum than can be set down in any ritual, is his own mortal body.

As the body is thus to be treated like a divine temple; so the new Spirit within us, the inward man of the heart, is to be treated like a son of the prophets. Manoah, understanding that his son was to be a Nazarite, a consecrated person, solicitously asked, from the first moment of his conception, "How shall we order the child? and how shall we do unto him?" The very same concern every Christian should reasonably be in with regard to his own heart, considered as the place, where a hopeful particle of higher life is now kindling, where the likeness of Christ is beginning to be delineated, (which important rudiments, who would not tremble to disturb by any thing?) and where the Holy Spirit vouchsafes his instructions. Every syllable from that teacher is valuable; if we should be so unhappy as to disobey or check any light of his, restored it may be again, but no creature can ensure or promise the restoration of it. Thus we see, a man's own soul and body, instead of making free with them as his own, become now a depositum with which he stands intrusted from his Lord, just as one may be intrusted with any other affair exterior to himself, and about which, at his peril, he is to show fidelity and dili-

gence. So that, "reverence thyself!" which was a saying of some old philosophers, has now a most substantial ground and meaning: but a meaning, so far from carrying in it self-sufficiency and pride, that it implies a constant sense of insufficiency for a weighty trust, and a dread of committing oversights.

Nor is a man only obliged to consider his own self in a respectful light, but the objects for a like manner of consideration multiply even *ad infinitum*; it being, in some view or other, applicable to every human soul we see about us. And with regard to ourselves, we are indeed divided betwixt two affections, very contrary to each other, yet agreeing in this, that both do press down the mind) namely, a religious esteem for our substance; in itself, and for what has been divinely wrought therein without our assistance; and on the other hand, shame and grief, more or less, for most of the acts we ourselves have done, or, at least, for circumstantial defects attending them: but with regard to others, the esteem is predominant and unallayed. For we view them only on one side. We see in every human face at least that being or creature, which it is true, not only the 8th Psalm, but daily experience shows to have been made "a little lower than the angels," but which the Scripture nevertheless represents as a kind of favourite before them: we see, I say, infallibly, (if it be but a man we look at) a jewel, which the Creator thought worth while to purchase with his own blood. Suppose that redemption is not effectually applied to him at present, yet it can be; and, in the mean while, we may probably find even in such a one many qua-

lities, which, though they will not bear the balance of the sanctuary, are, however, amiable in their kind, yea may put us, who have received more grace, to the blush.

But if the person be an actual fellow-partaker of the gospel-salvation, we shall certainly discern reasons for so much honour and reverence towards him, as, if the modes of human life did but permit it, would cast us numberless times at his feet. For he is then not only supposed to have, in general, a spirit, soul, and body, under preparation for eternal life, like our own; but we must needs, at several opportunities, have discovered in him beyond contradiction, be he even the lowest and least eminent member of the mystical body, some special and striking instances of fidelity, uprightness, or generosity; yea tokens and proofs in word and behaviour, symptoms and rays on the very countenance of that precious mind and nature of Christ. Here a child of God has a penetrating eye, as well as a tenacious memory, to treasure up whatever he has once seen in his neighbour: and all this worth of his brother is sure to appear to him in so advantageous a light, that he shall make a great doubt whether he himself possesses, in the degree at least, or could in like circumstances do, any thing fit to be once named with it.

This may serve as a short summary of the effects, which redemption, in this respect, has upon the mind.

We shall now conclude in one word, since it seems so plainly to be the result,—That whoever knows either what creation or redemption means, must needs serve God with reverence? Yea, as the calls for,

and exercises of, such reverential disposition, are withal found to be numberless, must indeed stand in a perpetual uninterrupted awe? So that I could almost say, the walk of a Brahman, who is continually afraid of treading upon some insect, might, (only that our reasons are juster, and his gloom and littleness of mind far removed) in point of the soft and considerate step, serve for a pretty near emblem of ours. Or, shall we first hear, what can perhaps be objected against this?

From two quarters one may expect objections.

1. From the moralist. "Is not this a degrading and depressing of human nature too much? I do not like to have such a weight hung upon man." Why! let us then take it off, and see what will be the consequence. Every man has also a column of gravitating air over his head, and a quantity of it compassing him all round: let us remove this incumbrance too, and see who will be the gainer. Does not that pressure of the air create the very strength and firmness of bodies? So it is here. You speak of moral worth in man: that worth is the effect of principles: And what is a principle? It is a certain thought or idea, which, by its excellency, keeps the man in constant admiration of it; more properly has mastered him, than he is master of it; not only impels his mind as the weight does a machine, but from some higher chair corrects him like a school-boy for his defects. Could we conceive any principle so low and unelevated, that the person is able quite to come up with it, and owes it no blushing reverence of this sort; it would, at the same

me, cease to be what we call a principle. A man f principle, therefore, be it of what nature it will, a bashful man, dissatisfied with himself, and a true votee. Not only the cloistered monk falls down fore a shrine; not only every pious Christian has a object for his constant obeisance; but all men, in neral, must have something of the same turn of ind, (happy he who directs it to the very best and ost profitable scope!) or else they are mere trifiers l their days, exceptions from the gravity and dig-ity of human nature, and lighter than vanity itself. man of worth must have his ballast; and that bal-st is reverence, of some kind or other: he that re-rences nothing, has at the same time no worth. ut without discussing the point so far, a sensible jector might only be asked, Have you then been lled to any posture of mind, but what is the pure nsequence of thought and reflection, that glory, you deem it, of the human make, on supposition at you have either been created, or redeemed, not say both?

2. From the man of more than common spiritual tainments. "Though (may this objector be sup-sed to argue) such a posture of reverence, yea mbling, may be wholesome for the human com-exion in general, and may properly attend also the ginnings of religion; yet sure there must be a ne, when an advanced Christian shall have out-own it." I answer: When, and from what con-leration, shall we imagine him to out-grow the ecies of awe now contended for?

That which bids fairest for superseding all affec-

tions of this kind, is the spirit of love, that state of intimate and confident familiarity with our Lord. We have seen, St. John even affirms, that this, when perfect, casteth out fear; some sort of fear. But that it cannot be the sort we here mean, needs no other proof, than barely to look back and see, whether all the parts and expressions of reverence by us enumerated, be not at the same time so many natural and quite inseparable characters and fruits of the most ardent, entire, and devoted love that can possibly be imagined?

A second plea for an exemption, we will suppose to be gifts, talents, and illuminations. Do not these exempt the owner from the common conditions of mankind? Yes,—in order to charge him double with obligations to the state of mind we are speaking of. Because, the more of these, the more he becomes answerable for; and the more opportunities there are for hurting one or other delicate part of his commission. For a commission it is, and such a one as constitutes him the mere servant of those about him.

A third ground may be, when a person thinks himself enabled to say, "What need I to fear now in any kind whatsoever? Sin and corruption, the cause of all fear, is conquered and mortified in me." Now there is certainly such a thing, as real victory over sin; and it belongs even to young and old, that trust in Christ. Only it still belongs in such a manner, that whoever has it in truth, possesses it always with modesty and trembling, "He that thinketh he standeth," says the apostle, "let him

take heed lest he fall." On this head, let Macarius speak. "As merchants on their voyage, though they have a favourable wind and smooth sea, yet till they reach the port, are always in some fear, lest a contrary wind arising, the sea be agitated into waves, and endanger the ship: so Christians, though they have a prosperous wind of the Holy Spirit breathing within them, yet are still apprehensive, lest possibly some wind of the adverse power might come upon them, and by its blowing occasion at least waves and disturbance to their souls. There is need therefore of much diligence, in order to arrive at the haven of rest, the perfect world, that everlasting life and joy."

How far an experience in our Redeemer's ways, a discovery of his thoughts of peace concerning our individual, and especially an affectionate reliance on the fidelity of his character, an acquaintance with his heart's disposition, may mitigate the anxiety described by this spiritual writer; insomuch that perhaps it cannot well be stiled anxiety any more in the loving believer: this we will not now inquire into. In the mean while it is, we see, never quite annihilated; but even in the most advanced Christian, consequently far more, according to justice, in every mortal man beside, so much at least of that frame of mind unalterably remains, as answers to the idea of humble caution about one's step: as there remains also besides, an admiring and tender veneration for a great number of holy things and objects.

So that our assertion from the text stands good, That both man and Christian were made for religious reverence: since even the latter, when his joy in the

Holy Ghost is at the highest, when he has peace and life, and the kingdom of heaven within him, is still to "rejoice with trembling."

But I must confess all the while, whoever else needs it, the true and sincere Christian does in reality not need my admonition on this head: he is, in this particular also, taught of God. The requisite awe or trembling, which is in truth only equivalent with solidity of thought upon being intrusted with certain inestimable pearls, grace will not fail, by its own operation, to create and maintain in each soul. There remains, therefore, nothing properly to wish, but this: May our good and gracious Lord vouchsafe to bestow on every one the joy itself, which is to have this concomitant; those pearls themselves, that deserve to be handled with trembling! That is the main, the first point, and the point, with good reason, oftenest treated of from this pulpit. May He, I say, grant us all the knowledge of himself, a communion with him; not only that sort which we might have by creation, but especially that which is grounded on redemption, even "the free and full remission of sins through faith in his blood; adoption of children; sanctification;" and that "rejoicing in hope of the glory of God," which will one day cause them, amidst the crush of elements and the most general consternation, to "lift up their heads" who otherwise were used to think and speak here with modesty, to "refrain their soul and keep it low even as a weaned child." These saving graces may he grant us all, and that speedily, for his own death and merit's sake.

LETTERS, EXTRACTS,

&c.

LETTERS.

THREE LETTERS TO A LADY.

LETTER I.

MADAM,

I AM under great obligations to your good family, and even therefore you may command me, whenever I can be of the least service to you. I believe your turning your thoughts as you do, towards the greatest and most valuable concern that can possibly be, can never be thought amiss by your worthy relations, and that they would even approve of the substance of what I say. It is certainly right for every one, being come to years of reflection, to consider the end for which he was made, and how his existence may be rendered spiritually and eternally happy. And this is apt to present itself, at first, not only as an important, but exceeding difficult matter: and so indeed it would have been, had not the mercy and faithfulness of our Redeemer been so great, and his merits so effectual for us his poor creatures. Separately from him, how could we ever think to raise ourselves to the

divine favour, or to rectify our nature, heart, and life.

The notion of a very laborious, hazardous, and troublesome race, in order to gain eternal happiness, would be but just, if we considered only what our make and substance is, and what God and eternity are; but God be praised, we need not, ought not, to consider these alone: because we have a Mediator. He has taken the great burden and difficulty upon himself; has in his own body borne and atoned for all our sins upon the cross, is intent now upon saving every soul that does not refuse his help, and pursues this work in us as diligently, tenderly, and constantly, as if it was his own affair. He himself has undertaken to renew and sanctify, and to bring us to glory; and the very first thought we have about such things, was darted into us by him, and he will not rest till he brings it to its accomplishment. When we, therefore, at any time are seriously and religiously disposed, we ought to think it proceeds from this, that we have now a call and invitation from Jesus Christ our dear Lord, who once bled and died for us, stands at present in person before our hearts, and touches them with his grace; and if we only resign ourselves to him, and suffer ourselves to be inwardly instructed about the great mystery of his dying love, and the application of his powerful merits and atonement to our own soul, we shall soon experience a peace which passes all understanding, and a close and everlasting union with him. Our Christian life through all its steps, will afterwards be guided and supported by his faith-

al care, because we belong to him as members of is body, and his refreshing communications of imself to our heart will sweeten it all in such a anner as those can never imagine, who look only t the work and tasks that are to be done, and have ot yet conversed in spirit with their Redeemer, ceived pardon and comfort from his own mouth, nd consented and ventured to live in and by him r the future. They are Scripture expressions, hat we live by faith in him; that we are found in im, not having our own righteousness which is f the law, but the righteousness which is of God y faith; that his peace and love rule in our hearts; hat we are washed in his blood, made children of od by adoption, and sealed with the holy Spirit f promise. Nor are they mere expressions, but ey are accordingly experienced by those who give redit to the word of God, and to the sweet intiations of grace which men may feel sometimes in eir own hearts. For at such times, as I said beore, we are properly invited and drawn by him, our visible Friend, into a close union and alliance with imself, through the forgiveness of sins in his blood; nd this same gracious attachment of our hearts to im, is the very substance of our conversion and alvation, and brings all other graces, virtues, and ndowments along with it. And this, I think, is e greatest error of the present age, that when eople are endeavouring to be good and religious, ey do not at the same time fix their eyes sufficiently pon the Lamb of God himself; who died for them, nd is now waiting to bless them in a higher manner

than they imagine. You see what is the chief advice I now can give you, and I need add no more now, but recommend you to his grace, which, I do not doubt, you will more and more apply to him for. As you are desirous of reading some book that may be helpful to you, and would have me recommend such a one, I know of none that is likely to furnish more seasonable thoughts to you (after the Scripture itself) than a little book that has been published here some time ago, under the title of Sixteen Discourses on the Second Part of the Creed concerning Jesus Christ our Lord, preached at Berlin. J. G.

Letter II.

MADAM,

I HAVE now been a long time in your debt, but I am very well assured that the want of a few poor lines from me has been no detriment to you, since we all absolutely depend upon a divine invisible instructor, who has certainly been nigh to you; he alone makes the personal, powerful, and emphatical application to the heart of those great Scripture doctrines, the general truth of which it is our duty to inculcate on one another, but which you however have so good a conception of, that there seems to need no further inculcation. For you are convinced that our Saviour's precious blood is sufficient to wash away all guilt and misery in general, yea to entitle and seal us unto everlasting happiness.

You have also, you say, some distant hope that Christ is your Saviour, and that because he died for the ungodly. We can indeed lay claim to him upon no other foundation, but his great and known love to sinners. This is what I also ground my hope upon, and find it an inexpressibly sweet consideration, that such miserable creatures, as we are, can now be as kindly embraced by sovereign mercy, as if we had done nothing amiss, and what we loathe and abhor ourselves for, inclines him to pity, instead of punishing; and more remarkably to help, hallow, and glorify. Praised for ever be that atonement and blood-shedding of our Mediator, which hath wrought such a change in our state. You may very justly think, therefore, that he is your Saviour, because he is indeed the Saviour of the whole human race, as soon as they are in distress and cry to him. But besides this, I think you may discover tokens of his particular love to you, in that he has found access to your heart so early, and notwithstanding all impediments: and in that he has led your meditations to the most necessary, wholesome, and life-giving subject, which so many other minds even otherwise serious, are unhappily diverted from. Hence, although I firmly believe, as already mentioned, that none are on God's part excluded from mercy, but that the door of salvation is open to all, yet, supposing the case were so, that but a few were elected, (which is indeed true in some sense, only it is a false conclusion, that therefore none of the rest can or will arrive to eternal happiness,) you would however still have the best reason that I know of to

conclude that your Redeemer had a quite especial regard for you, in that he has given you a deep sense of his torment and dying love; and a persuasion of the great efficacy of his cross' merits; this being the most valuable and heavenly light that can be conveyed to any soul in this world, and the sweet criterion of real grace. Go on therefore in this path, look constantly to and make use of your kind and faithful Saviour once slain for you, believing that he will keep you in his hands and protection till you come where he is. But you make one objection against your own joy of faith—"Should not I be also sanctified? I do not find I am sufficiently." I cannot suppose this operation of grace is wholly wanting in you, you yourself will not say it is; and it is in its nature a progressive thing, increasing as our confidence towards our Saviour, and our experience in his ways increase. To describe it in short, there is, as soon as our past sins are forgiven through the blood of Jesus, an abhorrence directly of all evil for the future, and an ardent desire of living according to his will and word, established in our hearts as a general principle: we can knowingly consent to, or take delight in no corrupt suggestion any more: and besides this, as soon as we know a thing to be sinful, we have now immediately (though we had not formerly) a fund of power through redeeming grace to resist, yea, authority to crush it: and, on the contrary, strength to act as becomes members of Christ. A cheerful belief of this, and even taking it for granted, is a great help to our finding it so, and also that we, instead of some timorous and

melancholy scrupulosity, cherish rather an intelligent and loving faithfulness of behaviour, a just discernment of what may be pleasing or displeasing, suitable or unsuitable to our dear Lord, who himself once lived a holy life upon earth, and yet had a real human body about him like ours, and felt all the common sensations incident thereto, only in an innocent and guiltless manner. This we should also desire, and may indeed attain it more and more, although we are never complete, by a childlike walking with our Deliverer in the odour and comfort of his merits. But, however, even where we fall short, yea, though we should spy many defects in ourselves every day, we have leave still to claim his propitiation afresh, to pour out our heart before him, and obtain counsel and help, and, instead of being discouraged, to enter rather into more familiarity and particular converse with him, and take faster holder of him, by occasion of faults we have been made sensible of. He is always tender-hearted and compassionate, and will not cast us off.

J. G.

Letter III.

MADAM,

When I read your letter, it puts me in mind of the time when I was myself solitary, anxious to come up to the description given of a Christian, and to obtain a certainty for my heart, and without any friend in the mean while to advise with.

This may seem a hard situation, but in reality it is not; for our dear Saviour is at such a time very near, and feeds us with his hidden manna, teaches us wisdom secretly, even the wisdom of believing in him with our whole heart: nor would the intermeddling of any one else be of service. There must unavoidably be enigmatical things in the work of grace and salvation of a soul, and these enigmatical problems must be powerfully solved to each in particular from above, nor can one tell the other the solution. The chief help we can be of to each other is barely testifying simply, saying it is true; practically and literally true; and on that ground recommending it, for one another's consolation. For indeed, if I know a neighbour who tastes evangelical happiness, and know (by ever so few instances I have heard from his own mouth through what doctrine or general instrument he became so happy, then I know in effect as much as I can learn from him for my purpose, since it is always some general doctrine or general instrument on which all depends, and not any particular or minute prescriptions. The general doctrine itself may be, and certainly is enigmatical, till it is cleared up to us by the Holy Spirit, who gives us a strong light, sweet feeling, and courage in relation to such great gospel truths, sometimes by occasion of a sermon we hear or a book we read, and sometimes when we are alone without either, so that we can venture upon them with our whole weight; and believe them fulfilled in us and in us: and the main point being thus clear and palpable to our hearts, it enables us to be on

own casuists and counsellors as to every thing else. What is now the great point, the great truth which can make us happy, and which brings such a train of solid felicities after it as are beyond description? I need not tell you—you know it very well: It is the meritorious death of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which, and faith therein, we have pardon and righteousness, strength and sanctification, and sweet comfort by the daily loving conversation of our heart with him over and above. If I need not tell you this, what need I tell you? Perhaps the method how to attain faith. There is no method but only being poor and needy—Perhaps how to proceed in the adjusting of your outward circumstances; where and how to spend your time. This I cannot advise in particular, but I rather think that Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind, which our Lord Jesus Christ will give you, by faith and the knowledge of himself, will instruct you in the right time about all you are to do or omit: but still surely the principal thing is, directly and without any more ado, to entreat him for your share of grace, peace, and life, and to be washed in his blood and inwardly united to him. As to all other things, I can give you no other rule for your proceedings in the interim, but to do as near as you can, as other religious persons do, and not to be too forward to any extraordinary step. Your practical understanding, as hinted already, will increase of itself. Therefore I can speak of nothing to you, at least at present, but the general object of the heart, that suffering Saviour who has shown so much love, and promised us so many bles-

sings, and into whose kingdom and arms we are invited by the Gospel to come to him so substantially, that we can henceforth live, move, and have our being in him, who washed away our sins. Thus I cannot be your director; but one thing I can do, I can rejoice with you that our Saviour vouchsafes to work upon, and lead you by his grace, and also that he has appointed you to belong to so well-disposed a family in general; this I think of with pleasure.

J. G.

LETTER TO MR. CHARLES WESLEY.

DEAR SIR, *Jan.* 23*d*, 1738.

I UNDERSTAND that you have written to me, but the letter happened to be lost, and I did not receive it. Your brother desired me to read his sermon for him; which God willing, I shall do next Sunday. I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of faith is to the mind of man; how peculiarly intolerable, even to most religious men. One may say the most unchristian things, even down to deism; the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights, and visions; the most severe things, even the whole rigour of ascetic mortification; and all this will be forgiven. But if you speak of faith, in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the utmost,—a most universel help and refuge: in such a manner as takes away glorying,

but adds happiness to wretched man;—as discovers greater pollution in the best of us than we could before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance from it, than we could before expect:—If any one offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence, as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation, their mediator, and their hopes of forgiveness. I am persuaded that a Montanist or a Novatian, who from the height of his purity should look down with contempt upon poor sinners, and exclude them from all mercy, would not be thought such an overthrower of the Gospel, as he who should learn from the Author of it, to be a friend of publicans and sinners, and to sit down upon a level with them as soon as they begin to repent. But this is not to be wondered at. For all religious people have such a quantity of righteousness acquired by such painful exercise, and formed at last into current habits, which is their wealth both for this world and the next! Now all other schemes of religion are either so complaisant, as to tell them they are very rich, and have enough to triumph in; or else, only a little rough, but friendly in the main, by telling them their riches are not yet sufficient, but by such arts of self-denial and mental refinement, they may enlarge the stock. But the doctrine of faith is a downright robber; it takes away all this wealth, and only tells us, it is deposited for us with some one else, upon whose bounty we must live like mere beggars. Indeed they who are truly beggars, vile and filthy sinners till very lately, may stoop to live in this dependent condition; it suits them well

enough: but those who have long distinguished themselves from the herd of vicious wretches: or have even gone beyond moral men;—for them to be told that they are either not so well, or but the same needy, impotent, insignificant vessels or mercy with the others; this is more shocking to reason than transubstantiation. For reason had rather resign its pretensions, to judge what is bread or flesh, than have this honour wrested from it, to be the architect of virtue and righteousness. But where am I running? My design was only to give you warning, that wherever you go, this foolishness of preaching will alienate hearts from you, and open mouths against you. What are you then to do, my dear friend? I will not exhort you to courage: we need not talk of that, for nothing that is approaching, is evil. I will only mention the prejudice we shall be under, if we seem in the least to lay aside universal charity and modesty of expression. Though we love some persons more than we did, let us love none less: and the rather, because we cannot say any one is bad, or destitute of divine grace, for not thinking as we do; he only less apprehends, less enjoys that in Christianity, which is the refuge of the weak and miserable, and will be his when he finds himself so. Indignation at mankind is a temper unsuitable to this cause: if we are indeed at peace with God in Christ, let it soften our demeanour still more, even towards gainsayers. Let them reject us; till then, and (as far as it will be admitted) afterwards, let our friendship with them continue inviolate. Then as to expressions, what has given most offence hitherto, is

what perhaps may best be spared. As some people's confident and hasty triumphs in the grace of God; not by way of humble thankfulness to him for looking upon them, or acknowledgment of some peace and strength unknown before, which they hope will be increased to them; but insisting on the completeness of their justification, the completeness of their deliverance already from all sin, and taking to them every apostolical boast in the strongest terms. I do not deny but power over sin, and every gospel privilege, is bestowed, perhaps in as large a degree, in the beginning of grace, as at any time afterwards: for it depends on the actual operation of the Spirit that moment upon the heart, not on a mere federal or habitual union with him; and his operation is particularly strong at the first entrance upon a new life. Yet as such converts must remember, that this absolute degree of innocence, excluding for the most part even the first motions of sin, may soon depart from them, and be given them but sometimes; though till they fall from God, they will still be free from wilful sins: so while it continues, it is the most slippery and dangerous thing among all the blessings they receive, for themselves to reflect much upon: and the most exceptionable that they can talk of to other men. Let us speak of every thing in such a manner, as may convey glory to Christ, without letting it glance on ourselves by the way.

J. G.

LETTER TO THE REV. MR. W.

DEAR SIR,

I AM really at a loss what to write, which is strange, as I am writing to one I so particularly love; but the office of directing, which you are so kind as to invest me with, makes me blush; and indeed I think whoever will undertake to do it in such matters, can but play the empiric: not but that, as you observe, one man may be made the instrument of comfort to another; but then it is only by throwing out some thoughts agreeable to truth in the heap, perfectly ignorant which of them will and ought to hit: and not as the systematic adept imagines or intends by virtue of some precise arrangement he gives them.

What induced me to say something like an exhorter, which I am satisfied you do not take amiss, but only I myself am embarrassed how to go on in it, was a similarity which I apprehended betwixt the turn of your mind through nature and education, and my own; which made me imagine, that if I described my own reasonings, my own obstacles, and way of surmounting them, I should find you too thereabouts, and we should move the more cheerfully in company. The likeness which I suppose, consists in the following particulars, all of them to our disadvantage compared with other people.

1. A set of ideas, cast in an artificial mould of learning. Not to represent the incumbrance in any worse light, I will only say so much, that all

the aphorisms of learning, even of theological, have their excellence chiefly on the negative side. They excellently guard against abuses, and set the needful bounds to a mind which is perverse and extravagant; they yield indeed an incentive sometimes powerful, because paying its court to the human understanding and passions, but for that very reason also clumsy, to that which is the vital point. But when they pretend to describe and circumscribe that, I mean the process of salvation, then the words of any one who has but a good heart and common sense, are generally more complete than those of a finished divine, and tally better with the unsearchable divine economy. For our logic does only pare and square the stones to set well in our own building; and in a higher view, sometimes pares them too much, or on the wrong side.

2. A disposition more prudent than active, proceeding more by deliberation, than by the impulse of a sudden warmth. In human life this is the more safe, though less thriving complexion; but in spirituals it has this inconveniency, that it checks the motions of grace, by beginning a scrutiny on the first overtures thereof, being accustomed to do so in all other matters, with an understanding certainly too earthly and narrow to pass a proper judgment here: while people who have been more used to yield themselves up to an impetus hurrying them without curious examination, and have, perhaps, where that impetus was a false one, often smarted for it, are, however, on the other hand, by virtue of the same disposition, brought much sooner and easier to the

point which grace aims at. This vessel is brought up to the harbour in one tide, whereas ours must wait several. The necessary degree of scrutiny is only to see or rather feel whether the impulse is specifically right, and something divine, and then we are to follow it, without further dissecting it *a priori;* for under that operation it will only evaporate and die. What hurt in all the world can there be in following it simply? It only leads us to trust in a Redeemer, to rejoice in his love, take hold of his strength, &c. things which in their nature cannot be wrong for any individual, and so there is no need of that demure and jealous criticism which may very justly be placed as door-keeper to the sallies of fanaticism, which is quite another thing, as it affects our neighbour, and tends to subvert the order of society.

3. A nice sense of equity and fitness. This is a good prompter to what is right in human affairs; though even then it is apt to exert itself chiefly on out of the way points; such as escape the notice of a vulgar taste; and what the vulgar moral sense or taste is struck and feels itself constrained to (which are, however, the more substantial duties) about these the more refined taste is silent, they being nō subjects to refine upon, and so gives but a very cold exhortation thereto. But in the affair between us and our Saviour, a great delicacy in the sentiments of equity and fitness may do us much mischief, when we consult it as master of the ceremonies in our first admission to, and interview with him. For we must then venture on something which might seem mon-

strous and excessive, shocking, and unjust, somewhat like a sick beggar's reeling against his prince, if he happens to stand next him in the street; somewhat like a starving person's snatching at a loaf of bread and eating it, though he knows it is not his, and that he never bought it. Our Saviour himself has much to do to encourage even a plain man to accept of the pardon and indulgence, the interest in him, and all the rich favours he then confers on him; for even he is ready to think they do not belong to him, and that his benefactor stretches the covenant of grace too far; nay if it did not appear so to the person himself, but he could for a moment imagine himself qualified, though it were but the qualification of a due repentance, this would be an absolute disqualification. But a man who is full of the notions of equity and fitness, is however most of all on a wrong scent; for he of course contradicts his Saviour's love, until he thinks it can justly be extended towards him, and alas! as soon as he is able to think it justly can, it must and will be no more extended. We must, therefore, consent to have a chasm made for once in our supposed chain of equity and fitness, and as downright sinners receive a treatment the very reverse of what rationally is due to us. Afterwards our utmost delicacy concerning equity may again revive, and show itself, in the fidelity of our attention and obedience to our deliverer, after we have once tasted his pardoning love.

These obstacles of nature's education I have often sighed under with respect to myself, and imagining I knew where the shoe pinched in your case also, I

advised the most artless, direct and confident hold of the scripture declaration, without th mony and circuitions of a man of learning and of prudence, or a man of decorum, but simp plain man (for that one is after all) who wa his own soul to experience the manifestation deeming grace. The words of our Saviour apostles, which I said we are to take quite (and there will be room for both you and m so more and more) are such as these. ' unto me all ye that labour and are heavy lad I will give you rest. Him that cometh unt will in no wise cast out. He that believet not come into condemnation, but is passed fro unto life. If thou canst believe, all things a sible unto him that believeth. My grace is su for thee, for my strength is made perfect weakness. This is a faithful saying, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, o I am the chief."

I believe you will scarcely any more put me plaining what is to be done in this grand Our Saviour himself is nearer to us, kinder an intelligible than any other man can be. You to avoid undertaking this, I have run into a satire on sciences and complexions, and used a sion I could invent. Yet one thing I mig haps do, if it would be of any use, I could t little historically how it has gone with me, n turnings and windings, though this be what I much choose, and indeed it would be nothing ent, only fuller and less edifying than what y

specimens enough of in the Brethren's hymn-book. But now I think of it, what need I refer you to any thing after the Bible but old Tindal?

J. G.

LETTER TO E. V. ESQ.

GOOD SIR,

WHAT have you thought of me all this long time? A long time to defer giving myself the honour, and, if I have any principle of gratitude in me, the ease of writing to you! I am driven desperately to wish, that you might not have thought of me at all; since I must needs appear, if any kind of reflection is spent upon me, deserving of the most severe. What if I have been, since you saw me, mostly pensive and dejected, surrounded with solitude, sickness and silence, not gathering strength like the heroes from rich circumstances, but like vulgar minds contracting an abjectness, that blunts every finer sentiment, and damps every nobler ardour of the soul? Yet was there no genial hour, no gay interval, in which the kindly moral heat did again thrill through my soul, and enable me both duly to feel my obligations to you, and, what I think a pity to do, except in such intervals, exchange a few ideas with you. It is a pity, I say, in the least to sully or interrupt that easy and lovely cheerfulness of youth, which may you long preserve, with any afflatus from darker and sourer minds. For this

reason, I thought, when I wrote you, I would, however oddly, turn a patron for cheerfulness. I would summon all the lightsome images I was master of, and recall, if possible, some of those agreeable sensations, which youth, soon blasted with grief and thought, had produced in myself; the paradisiacal bloom that did then, to the fresh and innocent imagination, dwell on the whole face of things; the soft and solemn delight that even a balmy air, a sunny landscape, the beauties of the vegetable world, hills and vales, a brook or a pebble did then excite. And surely there is something mysteriously great and noble in the first years of our life; which being my notion, you will not be offended that I speak to you, a young man, more as young, than as man, for the former implies something very happy, and the latter something very miserable. If the celestial spheres, by a regularity of their circulations, are said to make music; much better may we affirm it of the motions of animal-nature within us, in those years of health and vivacity, when the tide of life keeps at its full height, nor alters its course for petty obstructions. The soul is not like an intelligence listening to his sphere; her harmony springs within her own being; and is but the comprising of all the inferior powers to give her pleasure, while she, by a soft enchantment, is tied down to her throne of sense, where she receives their homages. It is true, indeed, to a brave mind, the grosser gratifications arising from the body, are not much. But youth has something, which even such minds must needs enjoy and cultivate, and can scarce support their heroism without,

and that is, a fine state of our whole machine, suitable for all the delicacy and dignity both of thought and moral deportment.

These blooming graces, these tender shoots of pure nature I was going to describe, but alas! the saturnine bias of my soul carries me another way. I must tell you, what I am better acquainted with, how a chilling frost, called time and truth, experience and the circle of human life, will shortly kill or wither all these beauties, and with them our very brightest expectations in this world. For, will the loftiness of your speculations, the generosity of your spirit, the strength and lustre of your personal and social character be the same, when your blood ceases to flow as it now does, when the imagination is cold, and the wheels of nature move with harshness and pain? Will again the subordinate perfections to these, the gaiety and sweetness of temper, the significancy of aspect, the enforcement of wit, the inexplicable rays of soul that recommend all you do, abide with you, when the body begins to deceive you? But what am I doing? Have I begun to carry the charge of vanity even against those higher goods of life, knowledge and friendship; which are the refuge of the best, and the veneration of all men? Friendship is a sacred enclosure in life, where the bravest souls meet together, to defy and refine upon the common lot. Disgust at this vain and sullen world, and the overflowings of a strong, serene mind, lead them to this union. But how will it answer? To say nothing of our friends, will not the sinking of our own hearts below the generous tenor

of friendship, blast the fruits of it to us? Did we use so little affectation in making a friend, that we need none to keep him? Must not we be always upon the stretch in some minute cautions and industries, in order to content that tender affection we would have in our friend? Can we make our love to him visible, amidst the reserve and abstraction of a pensive mind? In our sanguine hours do we not assume too much, and in our melancholy, think ourselves despised? Naturally, the end and pleasure of friendship is, to have an admirer; will our friendship then lose nothing when humility comes to search it? Knowledge is so great a good in the eyes of man, that it can rival friendship, and most other enjoyments at once. Some have sequestred themselves from all society in order to pursue it. But whosoever you be that are to be made happy by knowledge, reflect first on your changes of opinion. It was some casual encounter in life, or some turn of complexion, that bid you delight in such or such opinions: And they will both change together: you need but run the circle of all your several tempers, to see every notion, every view of things that now warms and transports you, cooled and reduced. This revolution in his sentiments, a man comes at last even to expect; is a fool to himself, and depends upon none of them. Reflect next upon the shortness of your discoveries. Some points of great importance to us, we despair of deciding. How little is the mind satisfied in the common road; yet how it trembles in leaving it! There seems to be a certain critical period or boundary set to every man's

understanding, to which when it comes, it is struck back and recoils upon itself. As a bird, that has fled to the utmost of its strength, must drop down upon whatever ground is under it; so the mind henceforth will not be able to strike out any new thought, but must subsist on the stock of former conclusions, and stand to them, however defective. Reflect, lastly, on the impertinence of your thinking. Life is something else than thought, why then do we turn life into it? He that does so, shall feel the pain of breaking in upon nature; the mind will devour and consume itself for want of outward employment. It will also enlarge its capacity of prevarication and of applying false colours to things. Little does the warm theorist think, that he is not to be perfected by any of his fine schemes, but by a coolness to them all. The utmost end he can attain by theory, is to revere, and to be resigned to God; and that a poor mechanic does as well, perhaps better than he.

But enough of this. I should ask pardon for the tediousness of my epistle, if it had not greater faults that needed your candour, though faults that perhaps you looked for in me, the pedantry of a didactic manner of writing, and that upon the old topic of the vanity of all human or worldly attainments. From what motive I chose this subject, I know not, unless it be an infirmity like that of some old people, who seem impatient to have young persons like themselves before the time: and to what end I know not; though you will kindly suppose, that in the way of my function, I am disparaging earthly goods and perfections to you, that you may not leave off a mo-

derate application to them, for that is neither possible nor rational, but only seek for true satisfaction elsewhere, by a hearty sense, and sincere practice of religion. For the world passeth away, and the desires, advantages and ideas thereof, but he that doth the will of God abideth for ever. J. G.

LETTER TO A STUDIOUS YOUNG LADY,

Written about the year 1737.

MADAM,

I WILL no more speak against reading, since, as you say, you take pleasure in nothing else in the world; for I cannot deny, but I should be glad myself to have some object of pleasure in the world; something, whether great or mean, I do not care, so it be innocent, that might be a relief to my weary mind. In the situation I am in, not yet admitted to the glorious comforts of faith, and yet sick of the burden of corrupt nature, a nature pretty long and nicely examined into, and discovered (let me assume so much to myself, for it is all I can pretend to) it seems necessary sometimes to set aside the dejecting prospect, though not to set it quite out of sight, which indeed I cannot, by some amusement, however low. The lower it is, the fitter for me, till faith in Christ raises me from spiritual darkness and death. Then I would hope for such solid consolation, as may well supersede the poor amusements and delights of the natural man. Thus I readily permit you to go

to a book, as I myself do sometimes, to divert and deceive a heavy heart. Suppose, after pouring out your grief in prayer, and settling your judgment and will as well as you can; by meditation you should then endeavour to forget yourself over a book of history or travels. But perhaps I mistake you all this while; it is no amusement, but some intellectual attainments you seek. Indeed, by such humble, religious reading, as is only used to awaken, direct, and comfort you in a devotional way, your mind and heart will be bettered, and that everlastingly. But if you suppose, it will be a future, or even a present solid advantage to your mind, to be well furnished with several points of knowledge in a philosophical way, I am afraid you will be disappointed. But is it not found, you will say, that such an employment of the mind deadens the senses and passions, and lifts us above this world; that it makes us more cheerful and humane? It is true, when a man's ruling passion is philosophy, or the love of science, like every other ruling passion, it swallows up the lesser passions. And this it would do, it will have the same effect, whatever the darling science be, whether metaphysics, morality, heraldry, or riding the great horse. For even those sciences, that are built on the eternal and necessary relation of things, except where they immediately direct practice; and there every plain man is equally animated and elated with them, only without the quaint terms, are no more perfective of the mind, than the most trifling ones are, when a man is but equally animated and elated with them. There is no more difference between the greatness

of soul, the abstraction from the senses, and the cheerfulness and humanity acquired by discussing some grand question of metaphysics, than that which is acquired by any other application of the mind (suppose in finding out the best form of a hunter's horn, and the manner of blowing it, of the method of flying up to the moon, or in searching for the old Roman causeway) than there is between the heat acquired by walking in St. James' park, and the heat you get by walking as swiftly on any other ground. Walking on whatever ground will produce heat; and eagerness in pursuing whatever kind of knowledge, will create an indifference and dispassionateness, as to other things; a loftiness of mind, in proportion to the value you set upon your attainments, together with such enjoyment and good humour, freeheartedness, and humanity. But then this will continue, which is worst of all, no longer than you are pursuing knowledge; when you have attained it, all is over; it no longer delights you, and consequently no longer inspires you with excellence of temper. It is here, as in hunting, all the pleasure lies in the chase, and as some say, it is in courtship, men are strangely inspired while they are pursuing, but the rapture is over, when they have attained. Yea, we are so disengaged and alienated from our late darling speculations, that we cannot help starting after a new one. There is no such lumber in the world as our last year's notions, which yet, in their day, were wonderfully fine and delightful. The fruit of the tree of knowledge will not help: it is pleasant enough, when you first pluck it; but if you pretend

to lay it up, it will rot. The learned man is just as happy in his stock of notions, as a gardener in a heap of old rotten apples. So you would find it, if the learned would but be sincere. The man who has discovered, as far as human thought can go, the manner how the world was created, and how it shall be restored, the nature of the human soul, and its state after death; and gratified the age with the brightest scenes of contemplation: when he has done, what is he the better? When the heat of thinking is over, will his heart be found in any better or nobler condition than other men's? Unless some bye-reasons engage him still to his old speculations, or the respect paid him upon that account by the world, and by his juniors, will not he confess, that he is never the happier for them. Will not he prefer plain common sense, before all such subtleties? And unless conscience restrain him: for knowledge will not restrain him, yea it is well if it does not very much weaken the power of conscience itself, will not he, after all, be as prone to seek comfort in a heap of money, or in love, and a bottle, as another man? Alas, alas! under the greatest accomplishments of the head, the heart remains just as it was: This is very true, though it does not presently appear so to us. I cannot therefore agree to that fine Platonic insinuation—"That as much as we have of truth, so much we have of God." At that rate, if we had a sufficient number of notions and problems, and were on the right side of the question in all of them, it would swell up at last to a beatific vision. No, no; nor introduce us to that vision neither.

There is indeed one truth that can do this, a truth that will make us free; but this is only the true knowing and receiving of Jesus Christ.

I have said more upon this subject than I designed, I must, therefore, be so much the shorter upon the other points touched in your letter. I am very glad, that your demeanour, which was never hard upon any one before, but by being sprightly, is softened still more and more, even towards gainsayers. There are two ways for it to be so, by virtue of your reading. One is while you enjoy yourself in the possession of some sublime truth, above the common reach, and from thence look down serenely upon the ignorant world, and pity, bear with, and humour them, as you would do children or fools. The other is when your philosophical paradise withers under you, when your fine notions no longer please, and you descend to the vulgar again, better disposed than ever to return and agree with all mankind, except in sin; because you now perceive that those, who have only plain good sense, have a more useful light to lead them, than any dazzling philosophy; and those who are more philosophical, but of a different opinion from you, are, after all, as likely to be in the right as you, in these nice and disputable points you once took a pleasure to be positive in. Whatever we may think in the fervour of speculation, the most valuable knowledge is that which is most vulgar; and our bright discoveries are therefore not vulgar, because they are not considerable enough to be so. They are so far from being essential, that we may err a little on one hand, and

our neighbour err a little on the other hand, and neither of us be the worse men, nor the worse friends or companions for all that. Perhaps I have said something that may help to give you ease under some of your afflictions. I heartily condole with you upon the troubles of this life. I am ready to sink under them myself. But I must distinguish them into two sorts, those whose edge is real, and those whose edge is only given them by ourselves. Of the first sort, you suffered several, while you lived with us, as sickness and pain, bodily hardships, and want of proper accommodations. It grieves me to think, that ever it should be your lot to struggle with these. Yet, while you continue in this world, you must expect to bear your cross. Comfort yourself under it as well as you can, by applying arguments for patience; and if at any time you have not strength of mind to do this, God himself will either support and comfort you, or pity and accept you amidst your weakness. And above all, your hope will not deceive you, of rest and refreshment with Christ hereafter, if you not only put your whole trust in him, but submit to suffer with him here.

One suffering more I will mention, allowing it to have a solid and just foundation—compassion for others in distress. But some afflictions there are, that we create to ourselves. To give an instance of this,—Suppose I should take it in my head to be uneasy, because the persons I am in company with, are of a different opinion from me in some things; this would be a very groundless grief. How so, you will say; are not the comforts of society destroyed

in this case? Not at all: the comforts of society are to love one another with a cordial uniform friendship, and to serve one another by proper and substantial good offices. But as for talking, it is but an idle business; and to build either happiness or misery upon it, is a jest. Let conversation bend to convenience and charity, stop its mouth, stop its ears, if it threaten disturbance to itself or others. And why should not the disagreeable subject be dropt, by your refusing to repeat or dispute? You want to set your neighbour to rights. Perhaps he is not wrong: or at least in no error, that you would think it material to deliver him from, if you were not entered into terms of emulation with him by these disputes. If he makes the attack on you, you can easily divert it: yet consider at your peril, whether it is proper to do so. Perhaps he understands Christianity better than you, and the advice he gives you is exceeding seasonable, though not so pleasing to you. Happy should we be, to have always those near us, who are better Christians than ourselves, whose example and speech should be most critically useful, where it most galls us; who should be instant in season and out of season, and draw us to that right and happy state of religion we ought to be in!

Now, after all this long talk, the chief thing, that by my calling and my conscience I ought to have spoken of, and recommended to you, I have passed over, yea, and I must pass it over, for I am not worthy or qualified to speak of it, and that is faith in Christ. This is the thing that I ought to speak of with zeal

and delight, that ought to be the brightest in my imaginations, and nearest to my heart. How little do any other speculations or reasonings conduce to this faith, and how insignificant are they, if they do not conduce to it. I know and actually make the reflection upon myself, that whatever I read, or write, or speak, upon any other subject but this, I am a miserable trifler. Perhaps then I do very ill to trifle with you. It may be you have felt the great work of faith, cleansing you from all sin in the blood of Christ; that being righteous before God, you may have peace thereupon, which passes all understanding; that all things are become new with you; and you have a new judgment and taste, as well as new satisfactions and employments, suggested to you by the Spirit of wisdom and consolation.

You seem to hint, in the beginning of your letter, that either you are in this state, or the desire of your heart is towards it. For you say, you now acquiesce in that which, by the description I could make of it, is the righteousness of faith. If so, then you have cause to rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you. J. G.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO W. F. ESQ.

DEAR SIR, 1754.

I PERCEIVE in you a general condescension, which is also sincere. I mean the transition into such a new taste and way of thinking, as

will do you no credit in the eye of human wisdom, and where you certainly have not conferred with flesh and blood. I cannot but wish you success in this track; for I know it admits of what is justly called success, and so glorious a one, as will sufficiently confute the imputation of foolishness, the beginnings laboured under in this world.

There is a mighty dispute now between us and the world about us; which shall pass for the wisest, possessed of the best sense and judgment, &c. I really believe, according to their standard, they will always be superior to us: Our advantage lies only in this, which every one besides is welcome to share with us as soon as he pleases, that we know that foundation, more durable than the pillars of the earth, the propitiation and death of Jesus, and its both comforting and sanctifying power. We have no other system or scheme, but to be honest to this principle, honest to possess it, and honest to live accordingly, and reduce it to practice. May we but prove steadfast and faithful to this, and we will not capitulate what weather we shall pass through: cloudy skies are to be expected, and are but right in the course of the husbandman's year, and even the dying of the grain in the earth, covered and forgotten, is no prejudice to its yielding a crop in due time. All we have to mind in one generation, is to do as the Psalmist says, carry precious seed, that will be found such, when every coat is stripped off, and the inmost contents displayed. J. G.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS.

THE blessed Redeemer is really nigh those hearts who pant after him, who have no refuge nor life but in his merits and atoning blood, and will surely comfort and substantially feed them from degree to degree, after they have once begun to relish the doctrine of his dying love: this kindles a fire in the heart that will no more go out, but will burn up and wither whatever is contrary to it: and, in a manner, melt us into happy creatures; who living always in his peace, are endued also with his mind and likeness. However, I can say nothing equal to what a heart feels in the enjoyment of his redeeming grace and dying love as the Bridegroom of the soul; and this being our portion through his free mercy, what can we do but be glad at our happy lot, ruminate over it in secret, and be very tender-hearted and everlastingly attached to him who purchased it at so dear a rate.

THE doctrine of faith is not an abject doctrine, but one that gives room for all the greatness of the human soul. It does indeed remove from religion all the little prospects and complacencies of ascetic pride; but it does not therefore let the soul sink for want of principle. That taste, those sentiments of holiness, and that vigorous pursuit of it, which

before was inspired by glittering ideas and a desire of excelling, is still kept up by a reflection, that may seem to those that have not tried it, little connected with magnanimity or diligence, Consciousness of mercy received. God has some deep and mighty spring of our nature to move by those means. He awakens some affection within us, that never had sufficient occasion to exert itself before; but when it does exert itself, is fit to correspond to the author of our being, by having all moral dignity, and all the beauty of sentiment and actions attending it. This affection is GRATITUDE, so lovely where it is seen in human affairs, that it meets with general commendations.

THEY, in whom there is the most unfeigned, affectionate, and entire cleaving of the heart to the person of our dear Saviour, in consequence of his having forgiven every one of them his own sins, know and acknowledge, that they are sinful men, who have been saved by pure mercy, and still daily stand in need of it, that they are appointed servants to every human soul for their promotion to all grace and glory; and, that, therefore, the old Jewish haughtiness towards all out of their circle is necessarily exceeding far from being the principle of these disciples of Christ. They have one great, plain, and unalterable rule of faith and practice, which is, to take the Lord Jesus for their only righteousness and ground of salvation: to love him tenderly, and

value him above all things, who hath bought them with the price of his own blood: to draw out of his meritorious death alone, all the strength and succour they can need for all parts of their Christian race: to be dead to this present world, and renounce all its various sins and corruptions: to continue always meek and lowly in heart: and to be just, compassionate, and charitable towards all mankind, and useful in their generation, in that particular station of life, wherein Providence may have wisely placed them.

By way of superstructure upon these fundamentals, he adds, with respect to well-disposed persons in general: the best advice I can give you consists in the following points:—

1. Daily meditate upon, put your whole trust in, and direct your sighs to your once wounded and bleeding Saviour, the general and faithful High Priest, Advocate, and Second Adam: who, even after his resurrection, showed his scars as the righteous warrior, and whose merits are gloriously powerful in behalf of poor sinful men.

2. Keep an open ear to his blessed teachings in your heart, and never at any time, by any indifference, double-mindedness, checking of convictions, &c. hinder him from forming you anew in your inner man, and leading you continually forward into the whole and utmost happiness that can possibly be designed for you. Surely you neither can nor ought wilfully to set up your rest, short of enjoying, according to your circumstances, every personal grace, or part of spiritual health, which you hear spoken of.

3. Never admit any prejudices or misapprehensions in your mind, against those, who testify what they have experienced of the death and sufferings of an incarnate God, of the greatness of his love, his perfect propitiation, and the free mercy shown by him to sinners (truths, which neither can be suppressed by, nor need be suppressed among Christians) but, if they are happier than yourselves, reap what benefit you can from their light.

FINIS.

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